

HE INDEPENDENT'S TOPWRITERS ON THE EVENTS THAT SHAPED

Mandelson -comeback to be blocked

BY COLIN BROWN Chief Political Correspondent

SENIOR CABINET ministers are planning to oppose any attempt by Peter Mandelson to stage a comeback after his resignation over the failure to disclose a secret personal loan of £373,000 ♣ from Geoffrey Robinson.

One cabinet minister said Mr Mandelson's career was "finished" and added: "He should go into business."

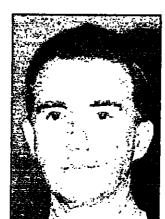
Suggestions from friends of Mr Mandelson that the former secretary of state for trade and industry could stand for Mayor of London were being dismissed "He couldn't beat [Ken] Livingstone for a seat on the NEC | National Executive Committee]. He wouldn't get the comination of the party in Lon-

in the next," said the minister. Cabinet colleagues are ready to resist any attempt by Tony Blair to bring Mr Man- did not make clear that he had delson back as a high-profile campaigner next year for the European elections. The Prime Minister, who leaves for his new year holiday in the Seychelles tomorrow, will be left in brought back in any senior capacity, moves will be made to discredit him further.

"This is about the holy trinity - Blair, Mandelson and Brown," said one of Mr Mandelson's former colleagues. "There will have to be a reassessment of the whole New Labour project now that he

has gone." After Mr Mandelson's resignation, the focus of the affair switched to his application form for a £150,000 mortgoge from the Britannia seen as the real cause behind his decision to quit.

John Prescott, the Deputy the task of steadying the



Mandelson: Unanswered ouestions about mortgage

Government, made it clear in pre-Christmas interviews that secretary, denied saying he he expects Mr Mandelson to n. Mandelson is not coming clear up the question of the ministers believe a halt will be two days, to prevent further embarrassment

It is thought Mr Mandelson another loan when he applied for the mortgage for his £475,000 house in Notting Hill, west London. He said at the time that he was financing it with a family legacy, but the loan from Mr Robinson - who resigned as paymaster-general on Wednesday - meant he was borrowing more than 10 times his MP's salary of £43,000.

According to building society sources, making a false declarations on an application form may leave a borrower open to charges of fraud.

Mr Mandelson's spokesman said "he believes it [the form] may not reflect the final financing arrangements on the property as these were undecided at the time of the application of the mortgage".

Any contradictions over Mr Mandelson's application form, which he insisted two days ago had been completed "correctly Prime Minister, who was given and appropriately", could prove more damaging. The Tories

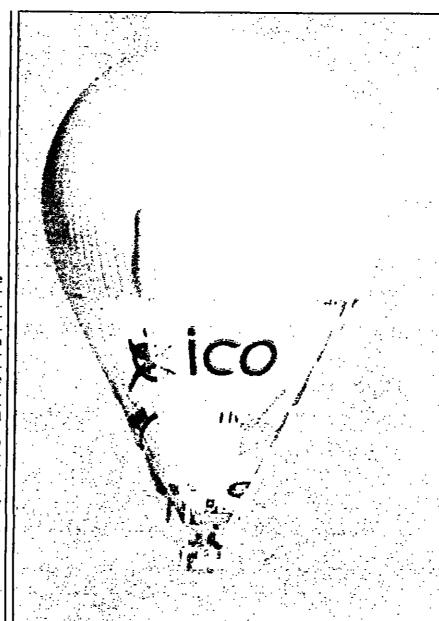
are determined to exploit the loan application to further embarrass the Government. Michael Howard, shadow Foreign Secretary, said: "We clearly need to know the position relating to the mortgage application. Mr Mandelson was clearly being disingenuous when he said he hadn't had time to check. One telephone call to the Britannia Building Society would have provided the answer."

Cabinet ministers intend to use the resignation of Mr Mandelson, architect of New Labour, to halt a possible coalition with the Liberal Democrats, and to clip the wings of Gordon Brown's spin doctor, Chartie Whelan. Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press wanted Mr Whelan moved, but

Despite a glowing tribute by Mr Blair in his reply to Mr Mandelson's resignation letter, the former minister's critics are determined to slam the door on his front-line political career. He has made several enemies around the cabinet table, including Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, whose job was under threat from Mr Mandelson.

The resignation is seen by ministers as a catalyst to rid the Blair government of its over-dependency on spin doctoring, and refocus the Cabinet on the delivery of better public services. It gives key players in the Cabinet the chance to regain some control from the Blair inner circle, attacked by the

Tories as "Tony's cronies". Mr Blair signalled that he wanted the modernisation drive Stephen Byers as Trade and Industry Secretary and Alan Milburn as Chief Secretary to the Treasury. Geoff Hoon was appointed Paymaster-General to replace Mr Robinson and John Denham becomes the new Health minister.



Richard Branson flying in the ICO 'Global Challenger' over Mount Fuji in Japan before the weather forced him to admit defeat in his round-the-world attempt EPA

Branson is forced to ditch in sea

RICHARD BRANSON yesterday BY CLARE GARNER abandoned his bid to become the first balloonist to travel non-stop around the world after hitting bad weather over the Pacific Ocean.

Coastguards with paramedics and helicopter support were put on standby to rescue the Virgin tycoon as low pressure forced him to abandon his expedition in shark-infested waters near Hawaii.

The descent, after a series of crises, came short of the 10,406mile record set by his co-pilot, Steve Fossett, last year.

Mr Branson announced his decision at 1pm yesterday. "I am sorry to have let people down," he told staff at his London headquarters. The lowpressure weather which had stalled his journey was "like a solid brick wall", he said. Putting a brave face on his

third unsuccessful attempt to

break the last great aviation record, Mr Branson added: "Until today, the voyage had been a fascinating journey." director, Mike Kendrick, said: "So near and yet so far ... The

weather has beaten us. We have failed." The three-strong team, consisting of Mr Branson, Mr Fos- around in circles for a week and sett and Per Lindstrand, had been hoping to celebrate with a Christmas stew as they flew over the United States. Instead

PHONE?

AND LOUISE JURY

near Hawaii. It was the experimental craft's first landing.

The balloon had already gone more than halfway around the world since taking off in Morocco on 18 December. Crossing the world's biggest ocean was always going to be the most dangerous part of the journey. Earlier problems were political.

On Tuesday, the balloon drifted off an agreed course over China. Peking ordered the balloon to land but after the intervention of Tony Blair and others the Chinese relented.

The balloon then managed to avoid North Korea, which had refused permission to enter its airspace. Mr Branson was forced to alter his original flight path to avoid US and British bombing strikes on Iraq, and then had to negotiate a narrow corridor between Russia and Iran, both of which refused use

But it was the weather which got the better of them. They feared they would have to spend at least a week trying to navigate their way out of the low pressure system. "We'd go still not be able to do anything about it," Mr Kendrick said.

Mr Kendrick said they had missed by about an hour the they spent the day trying to high westerly winds that would ditch the 279ft high balloon in have whisked them the rest of the sea off the island of Oahu, the way across the Pacific.

WHO WOULD pay

twice as much

TO CALL A MOBILE

Rogue London trader loses \$8m

A FAILED \$8m bet by a City of BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA London dealer caused the collapse of a long-standing Unit-States financial institution,

it emerged yesterday. In an event similar to the Barings affair - the respected under the multimillion pound "rogue trader" Nick Leeson -Griffin Trading Company, a Chicago-based trading house, was forced to go out of business after a mystery dealer squandered more than £5m on a complex financial instrument.

Christmas Eve, when most financial markets were closed for the Christmas holiday. In a brief statement, the Lon-

investment bank which sank don International Financial Futures and Options Exchange losses accumulated by the (Liffe), one of Europe's leading market for derivatives and futures, said that Griffin was in default and warned other companies against doing business

It was only the second time in the exchange's history that The news of Griffin's demise it had declared a member in de-

fault – a technical term which means the company is in breach of its trading rules and may not be able to pay its debts. The other occasion was when Barings collapsed after Leeson's bets on the movements of the Japanese stock market had led to a £860m loss.

Liffe declined to comment on the reasons for the default, but sources close to the company said that Griffin, which has been trading on the US leading exchange, the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) since 1976, had been hit by a huge loss by one

Griffin acts as a "clearing figure that would make a major house", an intermediary between the independent Liffe traders, known as "locals", and the exchange. The firm guar-Ty Fahner, chairman of antees and settles the deals

exchange for a fee. According to the sources, one of the "locals", who are renowned in financial circles for their colourful jackets and passion for alcohol and fast cars, had lost over \$8m on German derivatives, a complex and high-risk financial instrument. An industry source said: "We

carried out by the dealers, in

bank blanch but in relation to CBOT because it no longer this firm's resources there was a significant loss."

Mayer Brown & Platt, Griffin's lawyers, confirmed the loss. What I know is there was a trader in London that cleared through Griffin Trading Company's London branch and that person substantially exceeded their trading parameters and resulted in a very large loss," he said.

Mr Fahner said Griffin, which employs about 50 people are not talking about the sort of in the United States, was set to

give up its membership of the met the minimum capital requirements set by the US regulators.

Liffe insiders were surprised by the news of Griffin's departure. One trader said that the company, which is co-owned by Farrell "Tex" Griffin and Roger Griffin - was a well-known presence in the Liffe's trading pits. "This is a reputable firm, which deals with at least 30 to 40 locals. They are not a oneman band, they are a fairly established and well-known organisation."

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IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

'I am convinced that hunting, properly conducted, is not immoral at all. I don't expect others to agree with me. But I do expect them to tolerate my views'

Roger Scruton on the Boxing Day Meet

THE BEST-WRITTEN SUNDAY PAPER IN BRITAIN, FEATURING RUTH PADEL, AN WILSON, JEREMY CLARKE, PETER YORK, JOAN SMITH, SIÔN SIMON, GILBERT ADAIR, DEAR ANNIE, MICHAEL BYWATER, DAVID THOMSON AND CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT

Pope says stop sales of arms

THE POPE used his Christmas By LINUS GREGORIADIS address yesterday to call for an end to arms production and a ban on the death penalty throughout the world.

Speaking in the Vatican he said that a halt in arms sales was necessary to "restrain the bloodied hand of those responsible for genocide and

help to strengthen and renew the and so, paradoxically we have alconsensus concerning the need for urgent and adequate measures to halt the production and sale of arms, to defend human life, to ban the death penalty."

His appeal for the abolition of capital punishment was significant, coming a month before a trip to the United States, where 500 convicted killers have been executed since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976.

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(902-5 6.00 9.00 10-30 Week 11.00 Week: 1.00 Lunch 2.00 Lunch 2.00 4.40 4.40 6.00 with L 7.00 lais. 7.30 Anoth ten of

In Britain, Cardinal Basil Hume appealed for Christ not to be "squeezed out" of Christmas and millennium minster Cathedral in London, the leader of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, said: "What are you celebrating? We have He added: "May Christmas squeezed God out of our culture. most succeeded in removing Christ out of Christmas."

The Archbishop of Canterbury also warned that Britain was neglecting its spiritual Canterbury Cathedral, Dr George Carey said: "Successive governments have taken a commendably close interest in measuring the quality of British life, as a necessary part of the

process of trying to improve it. But all too often those efforts ... take no account of our spirituai health as a nation and of the inward life of each and every one of us round which every-

In her Christmas broadcast, the Queen called for an alliance of young and old. "It is not always easy for those in their teens or twenties to believe that someone of my age - of the older generation - might have some ing useful to say to them."

The parents of Stephen Lawrence used their "alternative" Christmas broadcast on Channel 4 to call for new laws to tackle racist crimes. Doreen Lawrence, whose son was killed in a racist attack in south London in 1993, said this year's inquiry into the murder was an "opportunity for real change"

LIGHTING UP



Pope John Paul II meeting Eduardo Lopeziira (left) and Marianna Romero, from Mexico, in St Peter's Basilica yesterday. He is to visit their country in January Reuters

RAF rescues **Britons from** Sierra Leone

THE RAF was racing against time last night to evacuate hundreds of stranded Britons from the embattled west African state of Sierra Leone. amid fears that a rebel assault on the capital might result in the closure of the airport.

Two RAF Hercules jets succeeded on Christmas Eve in airlifting 81 foreign nationals from Freetown, where a rebel offensive against Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's government has escalated in the last few days. The evacuees, who included

70 Britons and nine Italian Catholic priests, were taken to Dakar, in Senegal, further up the west African coast. They were expected to fly to London last night on an RAF Tristar.

"This is a precautionary measure, because of the deteriorating security situation," said a Foreign Office spokesman. "The situation is volatile. The rebels have a pretty awful history of atrocity and we don't want any of our nationals put at risk.'

In New York, the United Nations said on Christmas Eve it was evacuating about one-third of its staff from Freetown to nearby Guinea and ordering all other UN personnel stationed around the country to head for the capital. Washington also told US government personnel to leave the country and advised American citizens

The panic follows a rebel at-

By MARCUS TANNER

rebel raid to the capital since a Nigerian-led African peacekeeping force restored President Kabbah to power earlier

An army faction toppled President Kabbah in May 1997 and has regrouped outside the capital since the Nigerians forced them out with strong support from Britain last year. The rebels intensified their campaign after their leader, Foday Sankoh, was sentenced to death in Freetown for treason in October.

The rebels are notorious for their vicious attacks on civilians, and for raping, murdering and mutilating their victims.

An MoD spokeswomen said about 300 British nationals were expected to be flown out. Nigeria, the main power involved in the regional peacekeeping force, flew an extra 1,000 troops to Freetown to bolster its army of 5,000 in Sierra Leone.

Some Britons have decided 💘 to stay, in spite of the growing security risk, including the High Commissioner and an assistant. After the other Britons are evacuated they may also

Britain insisted the airlift did not mean it was washing its hands of Sierra Leone, a former colony. "The fact that we have evacuated as a precautionary measure doesn't diminish our very strong support tack on the town of Waterloo on for President Kabbah's demo-Wednesday, only 18 miles from cratically elected government," Freetown It was the closest the Foreign Office said.

FORECAST

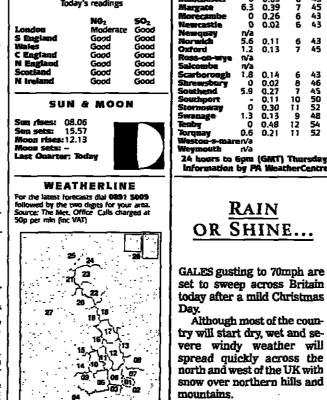
General situation Most of the country will start dry but cold and breezy. Cloud will quickly build across south-west England. Wales and Northern Ireland, and the wind will strengthen. Gales are likely in the these areas during the morning and will be accompanied by heavy rain. This wet and windy weather is expected to spread north and east during the afternoon. The rain will edge into southern Scotland and will turn to snow over the highlands, but northern Scotland will have a

Cent N & NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Max: Starting dry but becoming we and windy. A strong to gale force south-westerly wind. Max temp 6-8C (43-46F). N Ireland: Very windy with heavy showers. A strong to gale force south-westerly wind, backing north-westerly later. Max temp 5-7C (41-45F). NE & NW Scotland, W & N Isles: Mostly dry at first, but rain and hill-snow will spread from the south-west this afternoon. Increasingly stormy winds towards evening. Max temp 3-5C (37-41F).

SE & SW Scotland. Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeem: Heavy rain and hill-snow spreading north accompanied by increasingly strong winds with severe gales possible before the end of the day. Max temp 3-6C (37-43F),

London: A41 Finchley Rd. From Swess Cottage to Fortune Green. Major works at Finchley Rd Gyratory. Until 31st December Cambridgeshire A1 between Alcontunes and Haddon. Construction, lane closures and protein fines. Links 21st December. and contrafiow. Until 31st Decemb

50mph speed limit either side of Chamod Richard Services. Until 16th February 1993. West Yorkshire: M1 Between J42 Lofthouse Interchange (M82) and J43 Stourton Roadworks and a 50mph speed limit. Until 31st December 1998. Cumbris: M5 J37 Kendal, Roadworks, car



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RAIN OR SHINE... GALES gusting to 70mph are

> set to sweep across Britain today after a mild Christmas Although most of the country will start dry, wet and severe windy weather will spread quickly across the north and west of the UK with

THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY -1032-Low S is slow moving. Low R will move north-east and fill as Low T moves north-east maintaining its central pressure. High M is stationary. THE WORLD VESTERDAY

EUROPE NOON TODAY

Pensioner killed delivering gifts

AN ELDERLY woman was killed as she delivered presents yesterday - one of several Christmas Day tragedies around the country.

Elizabeth Giacopazzi, 74, of Tweedmouth, Northumberland. died instantly after being struck by a car as she crossed the A1, south of Berwick-upon-Tweed. She had been delivering Christmas presents.

A passenger was killed early yesterday when he leaned out of a car window and hit his head on a tree, police said. The accident happened at

1.40am at the Herriard Crossroads in Ellisfield, Hampshire. Police said last night that they were still investigating the incident.

A 10-year-old boy suffered head and leg injuries in an accident involving a police car in South Shields, Tyne and Wear, on Christmas Eve. The boy, who has not been named, is in intensive care at Newcastle General Hospital, where a spokesman said he was "pod ly but stable". Earlier in the week a nine-

year-old boy was killed in a carcrash on his way to visit Santa's grotto at Marwell Zoo near Winchester in Hampshire. Patrick Kaye died when his family's Renault Espace collided with a lorry on the Spitfire Link Road. In Glasgow, a 63-year-old

man died in a Christmas Eve blaze in his tenement home. Police discovered the body of John Leatham, at Stirlingfauld Place, in the Gorbals area of the city, shortly after 7pm.

In a separate incident, five people were taken to Glasgow Royal Infirmary for treatment for burns and smoke inhalation following a blaze in the East End of the city. The fire broke out shortly before 2am yesterday in a ground floor flat in a tenement block at Riddrie Knowes, Riddrie. None of those taken to hospital were thought to be seriously injured.

The John Lewis Clearance. It's like a sale, only better.

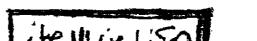
Starts Tuesday.

At John Lewis Department Stores, even during a clearance, it's business as usual. For instance our pricing policy, summed up by 'Never Knowingly Undersold',

means that if we find a local retailer offering the same goods at a lower price, we will reduce ours accordingly, even if their goods are in a sale. We still deliver free across a wide area. And whatever you buy, you can return it if you are not completely satisfied. The John Lewis Clearance. It's better than a sale.

JOHN LEWIS

LONDON; OXFORD STREET, BRENT CROSS. ABERDEEN, CHEADLE, CRIBBS CAUSEWAY (JUNCTION 17, M5), EDINBURGH, HIGH WYCOMBE, KINGSTON, MILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETER JONES LONDON, BAINBRIDGE-NEWCASTLE, BONDS-NORWICH, WILTON KEYNES, PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO AT: PETERBOROUGH, WELWYN. ALSO A RD STREET, BRENT CROSS. ABERDEEN, CHEADLE, CRIBBS CAUSEWAY DUNCTION 17, MS), EDINBURGH, HIGH WICCOMDE, RINGSTON, MIGHT & LEE-SOUTHSEA, ROBERT SAYLE-CAMBRIDGE, TREWINS-WATFORD. TYRRELL & GREEN-SOUTHAMPTON.



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Scotland will soon run out of snow

SNOW WILL virtually vanish from Scotland in the coming ntury, according to the Mecorological Office's latest supercomputer model of global

climate change.
The Met Office's figures show that the onset of global warming will lead to increased precipitation over northern Britain - which will fall as heavy rain, rather than snow. because of an anticipated rise in air temperatures.

Snowfall in Scotland is forecast to decline sharply, to a fraction of its present level.

The prediction, contained in unpublished data seen by BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY Environment Correspondent

news for the Scottish skiing industry, which two months ago received a long-awaited boost when planning permission was granted for a new \$15m funicular railway to transport skiers to the top of the Cairngorm mountains

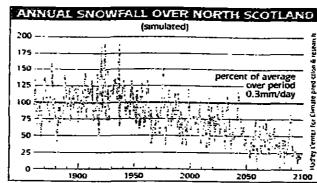
The warmer winters north of the border mean good snow conditions are hard to find, and the highest peaks, at just over 4,000ft, are less than a third the

height of Alpine summits. At Glenshee in the warm winter of 1991-92, the number of skier-days, which can be

180,000 in a good year, fell to only 12,500. But the number will fall even further, according to the latest mathematical model

the world's climate. HADCM3, constructed at the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research at Bracknell in Berkshire - one of the world's leading climate-change research bodies. The model, first run in the

autumn on the Hadley Centre's Cray T3E supercomputer, simulates the atmosphere with the greenhouse gases that the world is relentlessly pumping from cars and power stations). which retain more of the sun's



heat - creating what is known as the greenhouse effect. The simulation shows that winter rainfall will get heavier

in northern Britain, as average temperatures rise by an expected 3C by 2100 - a massive

matic decline in snowfall in on a year-to-year basis, but we cial business period. Last Scotland north of the Clyde do claim to reflect the under-October, after a long planning and the Forth. By the end of lying trend." the century snowfall is predicted to be barely a tenth of

Dr Geoff Jenkins, head of the climate prediction programme at the Hadley Centre, said: The temperature rise will mean that more of the precipitation in Scotland will fall as rain rather than snow, so the amount of snowfall will drasti-

cally reduce. "There will be huge yearto-year variability, and there will be some winters when snowfall is still normal. We canincrease. It also shows a dra-not claim adequate simulation

do claim to reflect the under-

Snowfall is also likely to decrease over England and Wales, but it is in Scotland starting from a higher base that the decline will be most

The heavy rain likely to replace it will do nothing to make Scottish winters more

Scotland's ski industry cen-tres on five resorts: Ben Nevis, Glencoe, Glenshee, The Lecht and Cairn Gorm.

The season runs from January to April, with the February mid-term school holidays a cru-

October, after a long planning battle, the Scottish Court of Session in Edinburgh gave permission for the new £15m funicular railway to be driven up into the Cairngorm mountains to replace the ageing

Conservation organisations, led by the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, had objected on the grounds that the large engineering works would be out of place in one of Britain's most remarkable wilderness areas.

Construction of the railway is due to begin in the new year.

Tally Ho! Hunts get ready for the biggest showdown

HUNTSMEN AND their opponents are gearing up to do battle in greater numbers than ever before today, as up to half a million people turn out to follow the hounds at traditional Boxing Day meets.

A new mood of confidence Il boost the festive atmosphere following the collapse of ast year's attempt to push through a ban on hunting with hounds. Around 300 packs are expected to take to the fields.

But opponents of hunting will also be out in force. Around 1,500 saboteurs are expected to over the last year, a period try to disrupt the meets and thousands more will take part in peaceful protests. The failure of a private member's Bill, promoted by the Worcester MP ichael Foster, may have given a joit to campaigners. A Mori League Against Cruel Sports suggests that two out of three people would now vote for a ban in local polls.

The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has halted plans to push through a new law on hunting until the reform of the House of Lords is complete, arguing that the votes of hereditary peers.

backbench committee of Labour MPs has drawn up plans for local referendums on the issue. They believe this would help them to get round the huntsmen's argument that urban dwellers who are anti-hunting do not understand rural life.

Anti-hunting groups are optimistic that the Government will publish plans to abolish the sport before the millennium. Mori questioned almost 2,000 people across Britain ear-

lies this month on whether they · Ad support a ban, and exactly two-thirds said they would local referendum. One in five

By Fran Abrams Westminster Correspondent

said they would oppose a ban and one in seven did not know. Mike Baker, United Kingdom director of the international animal welfare group Ifaw, said the poll demonstrated a deepseated belief among British people that hunting should be banned. "These figures will send a shiver down the spine of Boxing Day hunt supporters up and down the country. Nothing the hunting fraternity has done when they threw everything into their campaign to defend blood sports, has had any marked effect on public opin-

The poll also asked how people would view the Governnent ii ii did not act on n but found opinions divided. Just over four in ten said their trust in the Government would be shaken if it did not impose a ban, but a similar number said a failure to take action would

have no impact on their views. The anti-hunting groups are also pleased with the overwhelming vote for a ban in the House of Commons last year, when 411 MPs gave it their backing.

While the majority of the thousands of protesters who will be out today will make their views known peacefully, the Hunt Saboteurs' Association says the failure of the Mr Foster's private member's Bill has swelled its membership. Dawn Preston, northern spokeswoman for the association, said a "backlash" against the Government following the collapse of the Bill had led to renewed militancy.

"It will be difficult to find a saboteur sitting on his backside vote "yes" to such a move in a on Boxing Day. It will be a big day for the hunt, and so we will



Fred the horse greeting one of the Tiverton foxhounds as they prepare for the Boxing Day hunt. Around 300 packs are expected to be out today

she said.

The pro-hunting lobby remains defiant however, and its supporters now feel sure their sport will survive. A spokeswoman for the Countryside Alliance said almost all Britain's 303 packs of hounds would be out on Boxing Day, with 189 of them hunting foxes. Between 300,000 and 500,000 people would either be hunting or would be out supporting the

hunt, a spokeswoman said. While anti-hunt groups claim that hound packs are being merged or closed for lack of interest, the alliance says support and attendances are steady.

Alistair Jackson, director of the Master of Fox Hounds Association, said many hunts had more riders than ever before. possibly because of the threat of a ban last year. "I think people who live in the country do think perhaps they will make an extra effort to go an support the hunt on Boxing Day. I think everyone in the country feels

under threat," he said.

Ministers impose new tax

on restaurants and shops

'i'he alliance's chief press of ficer, Bruce Macpherson, said there was now more confidence that hunting had a future. The sport employed around 16,000 people and made a positive contribution to the preservation

of habitats for wildlife, he said "Hunting is a humane means of managing the fox which is a pest to farmers, and it can only take place because of continuing support from farmers," he said.

Angela Smith, Labour MP for Basildon and former head of political and public relations for the League Against Cruel Sports, has been out protesting every Boxing Day for the past 15 years. This year she will be at Maldon in Essex. She says each year more people have expressed their disapproval, and claims the number of riders has diminished

"With the horses and riders. it's quite a dramatic scene, and people do turn out to look at it. But I have seen them come to look and then cross the road to ioin the protest," she said.

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A 22-A-WEEK "tax" on every By Colin Brown food shop and restaurant in the Chief Political Correspondent atry will be proposed by the that a deal with Tory and cross-Government next month to pay for the new Food Standards bench peers over reform of the Lords would provide more parliamentary time for more A cabinet committee agreed legislation in this session. before Christmas to give the goahead to the controversial li-To the dismay of the food industry, the Prime Minister has censing scheme for a flat given the plan the highest pricharge on an estimated 600,000

outlets selling food, to meet around half of the £100m running costs for the agency. The agency is intended to

restore public confidence in the British food industry after a series of crises affecting public health. Whitehall officials shelved the scheme after an outcry

from the food industry when the White Paper was first published last January. The Food and Drink Federation described the flat fee as a "food poll tax". But Tony Blair ordered min-

iste: to revive the plan – to fulfil ுக்ஸா manifesto commitment - when it became clear

ority and ordered ministers to get it on to the statute book by the autumn. Downing Street believes the agency's work is vital to restore public confidence after a series of food scares, including Creutzfeldt Jakob disease from infected beef, and an E.coli food poisoning epidemic in Scotland which left 20 people dead and 400 ill.

"We think 🕰 a week is reasonable, and it was the only way of raising the money," said a ministerial source. "One probiem is that we can't put a charge on imported food so it will have to go on stores and



Brown: Lost battle for the Treasury to fund agency

Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, appears to have has lost his battle for the Treasury to bear the full running costs of

Restaurateurs and shopkeepers may pass on the cost to customers by raising prices. Although many owners will be able to afford a £100-a-year charge, they are concerned denied by ministerial sources.

that the cost could escalate. once the levy is introduced. Mr Brown confirmed the goahead for the scheme in a written answer on the last day of Parliament before the Christ-

Ministers argued that the credibility of the agency would be undermined if its independence was compromised and Mr Blair had ordered that it should be under the ministerial responsibility of the Department of Health.

To preserve its indepen-

dence, ministers will suggest to MPs that it reports jointly to the select committees for health and agriculture, in a rare merging of the committees for special hearings. There were rumours in Westminster that of ficials at Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food had fought a rearguard action to prevent the agency being fully independent by making it answerable to Maff, but that was

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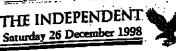
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Baby eases pain of last Christmas •

BY CLARE GARNER

FOR MOST of the patients who spent yesterday at St Christooher's Hospice, it was their last Christmas Day. They were encouraged to celebrate in their own way, whether it was with a glass of sherry and cigar in hand or with two King Charles

spaniels lying on the bed.

The highlight for many at the world's first hospice came on Christmas Eve, when staff and volunteers processed through the candlelit wards, humming carols and carrying Katie, a three-month-old baby, daughter of one of the ward managers.

This tradition of carrying the youngest child of a member of staff to the patients' bedsides began in 1970. Dame Cicely Saunders, who founded the worldwide hospice movement from such small beginnings at Magali Delporte St Christopher's, used to join



she sat and listened.

"The atmosphere is a very strange, paradoxical mixture of sadness and celebration which, I think, is the reality of Christmas," said the Rev Len Lunn, the hospice's chaplain for the past 11 years. "If the patients are well enough we give them a carol sheet, otherwise they listen. They always want to see the baby and sometimes they want to hold the baby. It's a very powerful symbol of life being in the context of death, a juxtaposition which is very welcomed."

Anyone well enough to go home, if only for a few hours, did so yesterday. Joanne Luker, 64, joined her daughter for Christmas lunch, knowing that if she needed any help or advice the home-care team was a phone call away. "You can't really put it into words what you feel and what you think," she said. "It's not difficult, but it's not easy either because they

are so perfect." Had Mrs Luker not been fit to leave the hospice, she would have been equally happy to stay. "I would have been more than happy to have stayed here with the lovely atmosphere that surrounds the place," she said.

St Christopher's - in southeast London – is "a strangely Christmassy place", as Mr Lunn put it. "We try to make what we do at Christmas recognisable to people who don't necessarily go to church but like the traditional bit. In other words, the candles, midnight mass and the jollities because sad people on Christmas Day."

don't want it, because I think they do. Dying people and their relatives like the familiar around. It's almost more important to have the familiar."

Dame Cicely's own husband was a patient at the hospice before he died in January 1995. She remembered: "I was in the ward with my husband. A very difficult man died who had been really awful to his children. His daughter took the weeks he was with us to forgive him and to relate to him in a different way. When it was Christmas Day the nurse in charge was able to get in touch with the son, who had always refused to come, and he came to help his sister. He gave his father his

last shave." Christmas has a special meaning for Dame Cicely, whose life's work has been a vocation. "There are many hidden places of poignancy at Christmas, but I know that the way care is given can reach the most hidden places. That can happen at any time of the year the carols. We don't tone down and maybe has a special value



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IN BRIEF

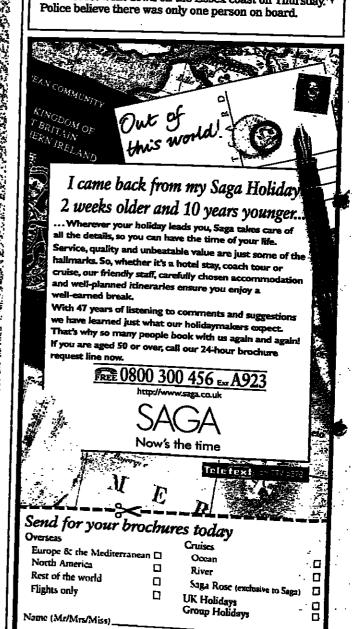
Noye extradition backed A SPANISH prosecutor has come out in favour of granting Britain's request to extradite Kenneth Noye, wanted for questioning over the death of Stephen Cameron in 1996 in

a road-rage incident. Mr Noye was held in Spain in August. **Hunt for missing party-goer**

TAYSIDE POLICE yesterday launched a hunt for a woman who disappeared after a works Christmas party on Wednesday. Sally Greig, 18, was last seen leaving the party

at a hotel in Perth, intending to go to a nightclub.

Pilot's body found off Essex coast A BODY, believed to be the pilot of a jet which crashed into the sea, was found yesterday. The privately owned Jet Provost went down off the Essex coast on Thursday.

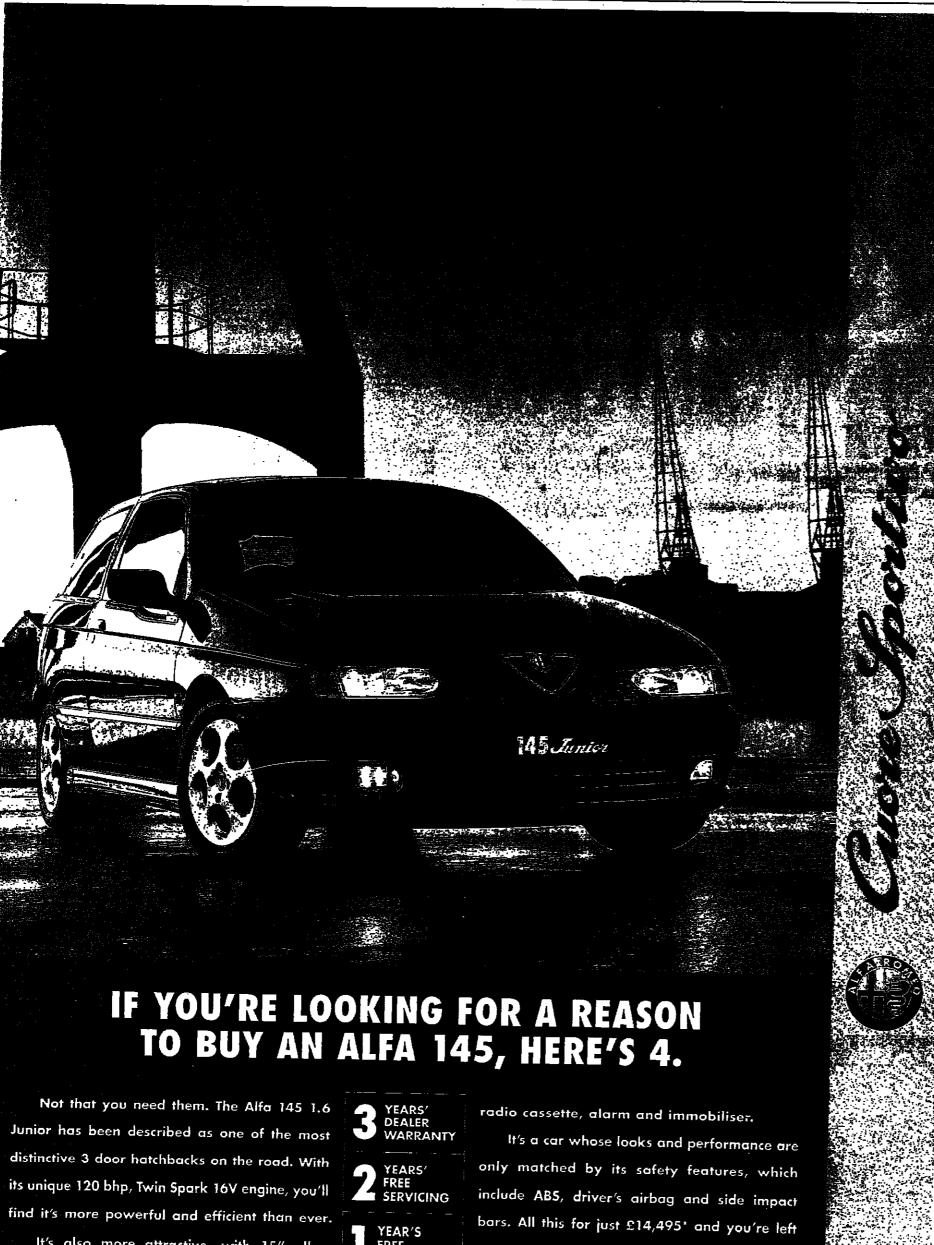


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مكذا من الاعل

Gatecrashers E- ____

Pati

, Bin Laden urge

China tries four



A Koran lies in front of a Palestinian child as his mother prays at Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque. More than 150,000 Muslims visited the mosque yesterday on the first Friday of the month of Ramadan

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"The No.1 Store for the No.1 Brand."

Serbian offensive ends Kosovo truce

SERBIA

KOSOVO

dreds of thousands of Albanian

The Organisation for Security

and Co-operation in Europe

then deployed the observers.

pending expected talks on au-

civilians from their homes.

MACEDONIA

THE FUTURE of the international monitoring mission in Kosovo was in doubt yesterday as the fragile truce in the province collapsed amid renewed fierce fighting between Serbs and Albanians.

William Walker, American head of the unarmed mission, said his observers had been threatened by Serb police after they tried to reach the latest flashpoint in the town of Podujevo, north of the province's capital Pristina, on Christmas Eve.

"I became more concerned about the security of my people after yesterday's violence," Mr Walker said. He said he feared the violence would worsen and that Serbia would not fulfil its pledge to guarantee the safety of the international observers.

"The evidence I have seen so far shows that the government is incapable of ensuring their By MARCUS TANNER

Kosovo's crumbling truce ppeared to collapse entirely on Christmas Eve after Serbia sent about 100 tanks into Podujevo in search of Albanian fighters from the pro-independence guerrilla movement, the Kosovo Liberation Army. The KLA killed a Serb policeman earlier this week. Yesterday, one Albanian, a sixyear-old girl, was reported killed by Serbian forces, although the

death toll is expected to rise. The assault elicited a declaration from the KLA that they regarded the American-brokered truce as over.

"The KLA will not stay with arms crossed, [but] will attack an offensive that drove hunand defend itself," the movement said in a statement carried in yesterday's Albanian-language media in the province.

Fighting in Kosovo between local Albanians and the Serbian

tonomy for Kosovo, which show no sign of taking place. The European Union envoy

on Kosovo, Wolfgang Petritsch, warned Serbia yesterday that the West "will not tolerate an excessive use of force by the Yugoslav army" in the province.

"Dozens of armoured vehides and tanks have been observed deployed in the region." Mr Petritsch said. "Villages close to Podujevo are [being] attacked by heavy artillery".

Nato's Secretary-General, Javier Solana, said the Serb of authorities started in the spring. fensive was in "clear violation of It slowed in October after Westthe commitments" undertaken ern powers threatened Serbia in October by Belgrade "We rewith air strikes if it did not halt main fully vigilant and ready to act," he said.

Serbia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, may be bargaining that the tough talk will not lead to action at a time when most Western leaders are on holiday and preoccupied with Iraq.

SONY

Patriarch hits out at clerical big spenders

BY MARCUS TANNER

RUSSIAN PRIESTS, a hunted species in the days of the old Soviet Union, have been rebuked for their increasingly lavish lifestyles.

The chastisement from the clergy's own spiritual father came just over a week before the faithful celebrate Christmas, which most Orthodox churches mark in the first week of January.

The Patriarch of Moscow, Aleksy II, told a church meeting that too many priests were addicted to expensive cars and mobile phones at a time when many parishioners were struggling to stay alive, a newspaper reported yester-

some of his clergy to "new Russians", the unpopular nouveou riche mafiamen and businessmen notorious for vulgar displays of wealth.

Some priests were out of touch with ordinary Russians, who are struggling to make ends meet as the economy goes through its worst crisis since the Soviet collapse, Patriarch Alexy said.

"Impoverished people see that they are not needed by anybody." he said. "Neither the state nor society is taking care of them, and now the church, too, shows that the rich and not the poor are closer to her."

The Patriarch complained that some priests were forming



Patriarch Aleksy: 'Priests out of touch with poor

The Patriarch compared Parishes had "business contacts with representatives of private companies, banks and the shadow economy", he said. "This does not correspond with Christian ethics."

The complaints are an illustration of just how far the Orthodox Church has travelled since the Communist era, when churches were closed, the nation was force fed with "scientific materialism" and believers were the butt of constant harassment and imprisonment

Today in Russia, as elsewhere in the Orthodox world, the church has undergone an astonishing revival. the beneficiary both of disenchantment with Communism, the rise of nationalism and a general ties with dubious and even ille- feeling of contempt - or gal businesses to obtain money. despair - about politics.

IN BRIEF

Gatecrashers kill eight at party

EIGHT REVELLERS in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province were shot dead by a group of armed gatecrashers who had been refused entry to a Christmas Eve party in the town of Margate. When the men were turned away they fired random shots at party-goers. President Nelson Mandela said he was "shocked and outraged" by the killing.

Bin Laden urges revenge attacks

THE EXILED Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, called on Muslims to attack United States and British citizens and interests to avenge the two countries' air strikes on Iraq. Bin Laden, quoted in the London-based Asharq al-Awsat. said: "Anything that could be taken from them by force is a prize for the Muslims." He is accused by the US of masterminding the US embassy bombings in Kenya and

China tries fourth dissident

CHINA WILL try a trade union activist, Zhang Shanguang, tomorrow for threatening national security. He will face a court in fuaihua city, central Hunan Province, for "illegally providing information to overseas organisations", said the New York-based Human Rights in China. He will be the fourth opposition figure to face trial in two weeks.

Worshippers overcome by fumes

CARBON MONOXIDE fumes from a faulty heating system made 250 people sick who were attending Christmas Mass in a church in Saverdun, in the Ariege region of south-west France. A crisis centre was set up to treat the worshippers with oxygen.

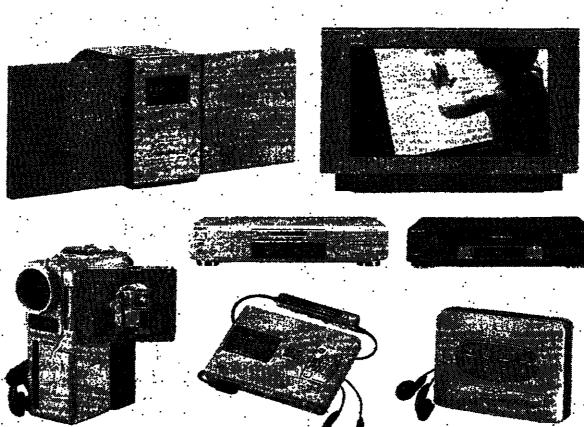
THE WEASEL



Geoffrey Robinson is strikingly reminiscent of Alexander 'Oofy' Prosser

WEEKEND REVIEW PAGE 2

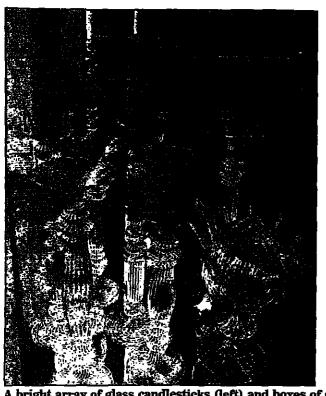
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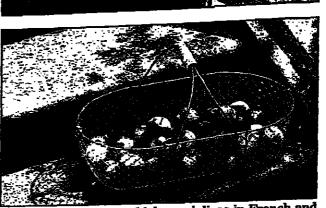
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NEW YEAR SALES GUIDE =









A bright array of glass candlesticks (left) and boxes of many sizes to put anything in (top right) are among the choices from Carden Cunietti, with a sleigh bed from Simon Horn Furniture, which specialises in French and classical beds (second left), and a wire basket is among the selection from House which is putting all its favourite things from 1998 into one mail order catalogue and knocking 20 per cent off the price of them all

o pain, no gain in the high street

ON THE high street during the BY RHIANNON BATTEN January sales, the happy new year shopper is much like the happy new year jogger - optimistic and courageous but sel-

dom convincing. No pain (the wallet-opening workout, the deft crowddodging drills and the discouragement of seeing what you bought your mum for Christmas in a shop window at half Shopping Editor

doubt be far cheaper now than at any other time of year) is the motto of the day and, for the well-trained buyer, the effort may even be worth it.

To get in to good shopping shape, the path to success begins with decent preparation. Wandering lazily into town for the price), no gain (if you find a peek into Debenhams may revamp the house. For Lonwhat you're looking for, it'll no well result in a surprise bargain

a tired, grumpy body and a carrier bag full of cushions that don't quite match your curtains and a retro-style cardi that's more frumpy than funky.

Instead, start early in the day, plan a route that won't involve impromptu monetary detours and go armed with a specific shopping list.

January is a good month to doners seeking luxurious dec-

Cunietti to grab yourself 20 to 75 per cent off candle-holders, cushions and glassware.

In south London, Designers Guild has reduced bed linen, blankets, towels, upholstery, tableware and accessories and in the east, there's Same, the funky furniture, lighting and home accessories store with up to 50 per cent off selected stock. including sofas from Asplund and coloured crockery by Dib-

putting all its favourite things from 1998 into one mail order catalogue and knocking 20 per cent off them all. Choose from rustic china, French wire shelves and baskets, classic enamel pitchers and sisal

For kitchen and tableware, Jerry's Home Store is offering Dualit combi toasters for £139, £20 less than usual, and Mulberry Hall has all manner of on many one-off pieces. Gra-

sale, including 60 per cent off Villeroy & Bosch seconds, 50 per cent off silver frames and cutlery and 30 per cent off selected Spode bone china table-

offering 20 per cent off most ranges of cutlery, 10 percent off everything else in the shop and up to 90 per cent reductions

24-piece plain stainless steel cutlery set reduced from £99.95 to £39.50, Richard Sapper chairs are reduced by 40 per racking. cent and a six-candle chandelier is half-price at £25.

Meanwhile, huxury kitchenware specialist David Mellor is

but it may just as likely end in orative items, head for Carden bern. Beyond London, House is china, crystal and cutlery in its ham & Green's sale includes a to 50 per cent off throughout

For the ultimate in linen try the Monogrammed Linen Shop for Lily of the Valley embroidered single sheet sets, reduced from £179 to £125 and half price gingham nankins at £3.25 each or The White House for luxury white towelling bath robes reduced from £79 to £49, fine cotton percale bed linen at half price, short cream silk neglige sets reduced from £775 to £385 and baby Dior snow-suits reduced from £95 to

Hedge your bets whatever you're after at Heal's. From handmade beds at 15 per cent off to dried flowers for 50p a bunch and Heal's own-label cologue reduced from £13.95 to £4.95, you should find something worth getting the credit card out for.

£47.50.

And on the first day of the sale, Frasercard holders will be entitled to an extra 10 per cent off any purchases made at House of Fraser stores. Sale goods here include Summerhouse checked bed linen reduced by a third and Artame six-piece Cookware sets half price at £100, with a free roasting dish.

For ergonomic furniture, try Back2. Beds will be discounted by 15 per cent and anatomia kneeling chairs will be reduced from £220 to £80. Meanwhile, Simon Horn Furniture specialises in French and classical wooden beds and goods include giant rosewood sleigh beds reduced from £5,335 to £2,100 and rosewood lit bateaux reduced by over £2,000 to £975.

But, if it is somewhere to put all your presents, the Holding Company is the place to go. Quirky storage items have up

January, including 20 per cent off Elfa shelving systems and 10 per cent off simple chrome

Christopher Wray is the place to find good lighting. Noncatalogue and discontinued lights, including table lamps, pendant lights, wall-brackets and exterior lighting, will be reduced from between 10 and 50 per cent and, for larger purchases such as kitchen appliances and white goods, try Buyers & Sellers. Goods here



include the sleek Gaggenau

ping workout is complete without some good old beauty buys to lift those weary spirits. Molton Brown has a covetous skin-care essentials pack in a clear zip-lock bag for £17.50, Space NK Apothecary has up to 50 per cent off selected lines and Aveda is also offering customers a lucky-dip for people 🚚 spending over £15 on three items, or £20 on four items, in its London shop.

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Leeds.

Georgina von Etzidot.

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Georgio 4 Hinde Street.

Ghost. 14 Hinde Street.

Todd. Lordon W11: 014

423-1057: 29 December

Giorgio Armani, 31 S

Street. London SW1;
0171-235-6232: 27

December until January

Gina Shoes, 189 Sic Street, London SW1; 0171-235 2932; from:

Graham & Green, M. Crescent, London, W. 0171-727 4594; 5 Tag

Gucci 33 Old Bond S

London W1: 18 Slow Street, SW1: 0171-65 5: 2 January

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:2" Landon SW1



repair festive excess

SK532 American-style side-byside fridge-freezer with stainless steel doors, reduced from £3.800 to £1.995.

And, of course, no good shop-

BEST OF THE SALES FOR THE HOME

Carden Cunietti, 83 Westbourne Park Road London, W2 5OH (0171-229 8559). (Goods pictured right.) All January.

Designers Guild, 267 King's Road, London, SW3; and 6 Relay Road, Ariel Way, Wood Lane, London, W12. 9 January for 1 or 2 weeks.

House, 42 Salisbury Street, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 7PR (01258 454884). (Crockery pictured below.) Starts 28 December, Same, The Bridge, 146 Brick Lane, London, E1 (0171-247

9992). All January. Jerry's Home Store, 163 Fulham Road, London, SW3 65N. 28 December to 2

The Holding Company. 241-245 King's Road. London, SW3 (0171-352 1600): 41 Spring Gardens Manchester, M2 2BG (0161-834 3400): telephone for mail order on 0171-610 9160. 27 December to 17

Monogrammed Linen Shop, 168 Walton Street, London, SW3 2JL (0171-589 4033). 4 January to 31 Mulberry Hall, 1 Little

Stonegate, York, YO1 2AW (01904 620736). 2

David Mellor, 4 Sioane SW1W BEE (0171-730 4259): The

Building. Hathersage. Derbyshire, S32 1BA

(01433 650220). 2 to 16 January

The White House, 40-41 Conduit Street, Mayfair, London, W1R (0171-629 3521). 28 December.

Space NK Apothecary, 4 Thomas Neal's, 37 Eartham Street, London, WC2. 27 December to 23 January Aveda. The Aveda Institute,

28/29 Marylebone High Street, London and various outlets from 27 December.

Moiton Brown, 58 South Molton Street. London, W1 (0171-499 6474). 28 December Christophe

Wray, 591 King's Road, London, SW6 2VW (0171-736 8434) branches through the UK. London from 27 December, Manchester from 26 December to mid-

Graham & Green. 4. 7 & 10 Eigin Crescent, London. W11 2JA (0171-727 4594); 164 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 8XN (0171-586 2969). 5 to 31 January. 5 to 31 January.

Heal's, 196 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 9LD (0171-636 1666): 234 King's Road, London, SW3 5UA (0171-349 8411): Tunsgate, Guildford, GU1 3QU (01483 576715). 28 December to 17 January.

House of Fraser, stores nationwide, 26 December to 24 January for Scotland: 27 December to 24 January for England.

Buyers & Sellers, 120-122 Ladbroke Grove, London, W10 5NE (0171-229 1947). 29 December to January 31. Back2, 28 Wigmore Street, London, W1H 9DF (0171-935 0351). 20 January to 20

February. Simon Horn Furniture, 117-121 Wandsworth Bridge Road, London, SW6 2TP (0171-731 1279). From 29 December to 31 January.







Clever fashion shoppers spend more to ee get best bargains

FOR THOSE lucky enough to By MELANIE RICKEY have some cash or credit at 🚵 their fingertips, now is the best time to buy fashion.

In this instance "now", and fashion" are the key words. For we are not talking about average clothes.

Real fashion is aspirational - it is what we quietly wish for, not what we actually buy. That is why this year, and into the next one, fashion sale shopping

Fashion Writer

should be approached in a new. less haphazard, way, which we will call "blueprint buying". The idea is to pick out preferred designers and a few de-

glossy magazines. in the January issues of the main fashion magazines, urban utility chic, luxury minimal-

sired "looks" from the latest





Fashionable bargains available, as seen on the catwalk (from left): Ann Demeulemeester black suit from Liberty, was £594, now £385; Betty Jackson sheepskin jacket, was £1,000, now £862; John Rocha claret skirt was £159, now £111 and black top was £397, now £278

tic hippy look get a strong airing, as do colours. Next year every colour - apart from black - will make a huge impact. The most important will be shades

of pink, red and vellow.

Once a few decisions have been made (tear out chosen pages and take them shopping to keep the mind focused), it is time to buy these autumn/ winter pieces with the view

ism, bohemian and the roman- that they will be worn continually throughout the year.

This will involve spending proper money; but isn't it better to have paid £250 (rather than £400) for a Matthew Williamson snowflake cashmere jumper from Browns, or a black Ann Demeulemeester suit - jacket £275 (from £405), trousers £110 (from £189) from Liberty?

These clothes are instantly

recognisable as expensive, covetable items, and ones that upgrade an outfit from just OK into absolutely fabulous.

The best places to make crucial blueprint buys are independently owned designer boutiques with varied stock, and designer-owned stores such as Chanel, Gucci and Prada who can make big markdowns on their merchandise. Manchester, Edinburgh, Liv-

erpool, Glasgow and, of course, London are the best cities to find them, although large towns usually have two or three highfashion boutiques.

In Barnsley, Pollyanna has up to 50 per cent off labels such as Yohji Yamamoto. Martin Margiela and Commes des Garcons. In Glasgow, Cruise has up to 50 per cent off Dolce & Gabbana, Prada and Gucci for men and women.

west London. Matches has a and delicately embroidered Prada raincoat for 2239 (from £435), and a Dries Van Noten

print dress at £180 (from £362). At Betty Jackson's London boutique one of her wonderful sheepskin jackets is £862 (from £1,000), and at John Rocha's recently opened boutique there are bargains galore, especially on trans-seasonal organza dresses, £315 (from £450), silk

In Wimbledon Village, south- satin skirts. £111 (from £159) tops £278 (from £397).

The choices are fairly wide at the beginning of the sales, but the closet blueprint buyers will be out in force, snapping up the pieces they have had their eyes on for weeks.

After all, why pay £500 for a dress, safe in the knowledge that seven days later it will be £250? Why indeed.

BEST OF THE FASHION SALES

Specialist boutiques A La Mode, 36 Hans 0171-584 2133: sale from 28 December to 10 January Alberta Ferreti, 205-206 Sloane Street: 0171-235 234: 28 December to January

Ally Capellino, 66 Sloane Street, London SW3: 0171-591 8201; from 2 January Betty Jackson, 311 Brompton Road, London SW3; 0171-589 7884; 29

Biba, 15 Shorts Gardens. Covent Garden, London WC2; 0171-359 3699; sale now on Browns, 23-27 South Molton Street, London W1: 0171-491 7833; 9 January

Molton Street, London W1: 0171-629 0666; 9 January cK Calvin Kiein, 55 New Bond Street, London W1; 0171-491 9696; 27

Chanel. 26 Old Bond Street. London W1. 0171-493 5040: 167-170 Sloane Street. London SW1. 0171-235 6631: 6 to 16 January

Stristian Dior, 22 Sloane .deet, London SW1; 0171-235 1357; 29 December Comme des Garcons, 59 Brook Street, London W1: 0171-493 1258; sale now on until mid-January Corniche, 2 Jeffrey Street, Edinburgh EH1; 0131-556 3707; 1 January

Cruise, 180-188 Ingram Street, Glasgow G1; 0141-572 3232; 26 December until the end of January DA Lilliard, 44 Monmouth

Street, Covent Garden, London WC2; 0171-379 8399: 29 December lce & Gabbana, 175چ^{دد}

oane Street, London SW1; 0171-235 0335; 29 December until 20 January DKNY, 27 Old Bond Street. London W1; 0171-499 8089 Donna Karan, 19 New Bond Street, London W1: 0171-495 3100; 27 December until mid-January

Egg. 36 Kinnerton Street. London SW1;, 0171-235 9315; 19 January for two

Emporio Armani, 191 Brompton Road, London SW3: 0171-823 8818: 27 December until January 10 Flannels, 4 St Ann's Place. Manchester, M2; 0161-832 536 for branches in Sottingham, Leeds, Newcastle and Birmingham; 27 December until stock

Georgina von Etzdorf, 50 Burlington Arcade, London W1: 0171-409 7789: 30

Ghost, 14 Hinde Street. London W1: 36 Ledbury Road, London W11: 0171-229 1057; 29 December Giorgio Armani, 37 Sioane 0171-235 6232; 27 December until January 10

Gina Shoes, 189 Sloane Street, London SW1: 0171-235 2932; from now until end of January Graham & Green, 10 Elgin Crescent, London, W11; 0171-727 4594; 5 January Gucci, 33 Old Bond Street. London W1; 18 Sloane Street, SW1; 0171-629

Hermes, 155 New Bond Sloane Street, London SW1: 0171-499 8856; 16 January Issey Miyake, 270

Brompton Road, London SW3; 0171-581 3760; 28 December for three weeks Jane Davidson, 52 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2; 0131-225 3280; 28

171-175 Draycott Avenue. London SW3; 0171-584 lanuary

John Lobb, 88 Jermyn Street, London SW1; 0171-930 8089: 28 December John Rocha, 60F Sloane Avenue, London SW3: 0171-838 0017; 28 December

13 Floral Street, Covent Garden, London WC1; 0171-240 8312; 6 January Joseph, 77 Fulham Road, London SW3, 26 Sloane Street, London SW1; 23 Old Bond Street, London W1; 0171-823 9500; other Joseph branches; 28

es. 15 Floral Street and

Joseph Azagury, 117 Walton Street, London SW3 and 73 Knightsbridge. London SW1; 0171-259 6887; now until end of January

Katherine Hamnett, 20 Sloane Street, London SW1; 0171-823 1002; 28

Koh Samui, 65 Monmouth Street, London WC2; 0171-240 4280 and 28 Lowndes Street, Knightsbridge, London SW1: 0171-838 9292; 29 December Krizia, 25 Conduit Street,

London W, 0171-491 4987/8: sale now on LK Bennett. 31 Brook Street, London W1; call 0171-491 3005 for other branches; sale now on

Manolo Biahnik, 49 Old Church Street, London SW3: 0171-352 8622; 8 January Margaret Howell, 29 Beauchamp Place, London SW3, 24 Brook Street. London W1; 36 Savile Row (menswear): 0171-584 2462: 29 December

Matches, 34 & 56 High Street, Wimbledon Village, London SW19; 13 Hill Street, Richmond, Surrey; 0181-947 8707; 28 December

Mulberry, 41-42 New Bond Street, London W1: Gees Court, London W1; 0171-491 3900: 27 December N Peal, 37 Burilngton Arcade (women), London W1; 71 Burlington Arcade, London W1, 192 Piccadilly, London W1 (men); 0171-493 5378; 28 December

Nicole Farhi.158 New Bond Street, London W1; 193 Sloane Street, London 5W1; 0171-499 8368 for other

Patrick Cox, 129 Sloane Street, London SW1: 0171-730 8886; 81 King Street. Manchester M2; 0161-819 5336: 27 December London branch; sale now on in Manchester Paul Smith, 40-44 Floral

Street, Covent Garden, London WC2; 0171-379 7133 for Manchester. Nottingham and other branches: 2 January Pleats Please, 20 Brook Street. London W1; 0171-495 2306; 28 December

Pollyanna, 14-16 Market Hill, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70: 01226-291665; 2 January

Polo Raiph Lauren, 143 New Bond Street, London W1; 0171-491 4967. Sale starts 2 January until the end of January

Prada, 43-45 Sloane Street, London SW1: 0171-235 0008: Јалиагу

Richard James, 31 Savile Row, London W1, 0171-434 0606; 9 January Sam de Teran, 151 Fulham

Road, London SW6: 0171-584 0902; 4 January Thierry Mugler, 134 New Bond Street, London W1. 0171-629 7020; now until The Cross, 141 Portland

Road, Holland Park, Londo W11; 0171-727 6760; 11 January Valentino, 174 Sloane Street, London SW1; 160

New Bond Street, London W1: 0171-235 5855; sale now on Van Mildert, 19-21 Elvert Bridge, Durham DH1; 0191-384 8500;

27 December Versace, 34-36 Old Bond

Street, London W1; 0171-499 1862; 6 January Versus Jeans Couture, 113-115 New Bond Street.

London W1; 0171-355 2700: 4 January Vivienne Westwood Man & Red Label and Anglomania. 44 Conduit Street, London W1, 0171-439 1109; Gold Label 6 Davies Street London W1; 0171-629 3757; 15-17 County Arcade. Victoria Quarter, Leeds:

01132 456403; first week in World's End, 430 King's Road, London SW10; 0171-352 6551; First week

Whistles, 12 St Christopher's Place, London, W1; 0171-487 4484; now on

Yohji Yamamoto, 14-15 Conduit Street, London W1; 0171-4891 4129; sale now on for at least a month Yves Saint Laurent, Rive Gauche Men and Women, 33 Sioane Street, London, SW1; 0171-235 5839; Rive Gauche Women, 137 New Bond Street, London W1: 0171-

Department stores Barkers, Kensington High Street, London W8: 0171-937 5432; 27 December

493 1800; 29 December

Debenhams; 0171-408 4444; 26 December Scotland and Manchester: 27 December elsewhere Dickins & Jones, Regent Street, London W1: 0171-734 7070: 27 December

Fenwick, 63 New Bond Street, London W1: 0171-629 9161 for other branches: 27 and 28 December Harrods, Knightsbridge London SW1, 0171-730

Harvey Nichols, London,SW1, 0171-235 5000; 27 December Liberty, Regent Street, London W1: 0171-734 1234; 27 December Seifridges, 400 Oxford Street, London W1; freephone 0800-123400;

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THE INDEPENDENT YEAR

Saturday 26 December 1998

While bombs fell and storms raged, politics suddenly became personal

ND WHAT will they say of us, these children of the history of what we did in 1998? Probably that this was the year that many of us lost the plot. Without the polarity of the Cold War and imminent extinction to concentrate our minds, we lounged like Babylonians on our couches, ate grapes and quails' eggs, and rowed furiously over adultery and money. And all the while the serpent's teeth of future disaster were being sown just outside.

In 1998, the personal really did became political. When that happens, human beings finally have a story that they can readily comprehend - without the necessity of having to think too hard. We are permitted to forget the bar-charts and the hard choices, and take sides for or against the fornicator. Who, in this instance, was the priapic president, William Jefferson Clinton – a man all testosterone and empathy, whose year turned into a biblical epic, as rendered by National Lampoon and made 1998 the age of war and fellatio.

As of 1 January no one had heard of Monica Lewinsky. Almost no one. By the year's end she had become the icon of the confessional age, a needy, insecure, questing young woman, given to telling all to those who she should least have trusted: what, how often, where and most bizarre of all) on what. Among her personal Oprahs was the pantomime villainess, Linda Tripp, who was secretly recording the details for later use. These were the tapes that trapped Ms Lewinsky, and that also, therefore, caught Mr Clinton in Kenneth Starr's perjury trap. (There is a verbal symmetry here: Linda Tripp. Kenneth Starr. Paula Jones. Two syllables, one syllable - the metre of murderous triviality).

The story broke, not in a newspaper or on television, less, from the beginning it was the only show in town. Press conferences to hail Middle East peace accords were hijacked by intelligent journalists asking inane questions about genitals and Tony Blair blushed like a nun at a strip show, as his American friend was given the third degree. "I want you to lisme," said President Clintoo. I'm going to say this again. I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky." The DC game of waiting for the American public to turn

on its president had begun. Outside Washington others watched and wondered. In February, President Saddam Hus-sein of Iraq tested the finally admitted to not going the distracted West to the limit, blocking the United Nations inspection of Iraqi weapons fastrikes. At the last moment the Russian economy had already



Annan, persuaded President Saddam to back down. But how. the smart question went, could a president so enmired in scandal deal with the many problems of the world? It was a question that might easily have been changed a little: how could a journalistic and political establishment so narcissistic and trivia-obsessed cope with the

near catastrophes of 1998? whole way in the Oval Office (out of the closet, improbably, came the uncleaned dress and its cargo of presidential DNA), the Secretary-General Kofi entered its epic decline. The and most ridiculous semi-legal

BY DAVID AARONOVITCH

world's second nuclear nation. its warheads rusting in unstable silos and its streets taken over by local mafiosi, was now convulsed by a political crisis, as the ailing President Boris Yeltsin sacked his government, and then could not find another (what a shame that his vice was vodka, not women with big hair).

In Washington they were sure that the people would soon demand the head of Bill. They did not. Not even in September when Kenneth Starr's report became possibly the weirdest

document published in the West since we stopped trying animals for witchcraft. (And when ethnic Albanians were dying in Kosovo.) Not in October when the Congress released Mr Clinton's videotaped evidence and we witnessed a president being asked about his orgasms and Monica's breasts. (And when new riots convulsed Indonesia. as the Far East struggled to limit the scope of its slump.) Hurricane Mitch offered a brief, dramatic diversion from the serious question of what Bill did

designate of the House of Representatives, Bob Livingston, was resigning his seat in Congress because an advertisement from a porn king had brought to light a series of adulterous affairs of the judgmental Republican. One moment Mr Livingston had been considered a fit man to hold high office, and then "bimbo!" all of a sudden he was not, on

account of his member. Members played some lim-

It was symbolic of the year ited part in the political life of that, even as the bombers took Britain too. Or maybe they did off to pound Iraq, the Speaker not. After the obscure escapade on a midnight common by Ron Davies, then the Secretary of State for Wales, the British media press played Penny for the Gay. Briefly. The outing of Agriculture minister Nick Brown and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. Peter Mandelson. led to a short episode of tabloid homophobia and The Sun's headline "Are we being run by a gay mafia?" But the British taste for this kind of

thing was, mercifully, fairly lim-

ited. The Sun backed down. Here in Britain we had important things to do. Once, of course, we got over our fascination with Viagra. The new wonder-drug's reception here seemed to suggest that the reverse was true in these chilly isles. Regrettably it seemed our tails were not wagging the dog. There was more discussion of whether Viagra should be prescribed by the National Health Service than over all other health rationing issues put together.

Trivia did not triumph. The Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland came about

"the heavy hand of history" on his shoulders, and persuaded waverers that it was on theirs. too. We moved, stumbling and occasionally cursing, into the painstaking business of setting up a new administration for Northern Ireland, the Omagh bombing serving to remind everyone, paradoxically, just why the peace was so important. The year ended with the first terrorist guns being handed in and destroyed.

The new Government remained popular and - on the whole - deserved to. The spending review of the Chancellor Gordon Brown cut no taxes, but put additional resources into the electorate's priorities of education and health. David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, continued his campaign to provide for all children what middle-class parents always secure for their own. The Queen's Speech promised the long overdue abolition of the powers of the hereditary peerage, and Lord Jenkins of Hillhead reported on his preferred method of electoral reform.

But if the Government's main objectives appeared to be right, some of its instincts seemed suspect. There was the charge of "control freakery" concerning the apparent desire of New Labour to retain central power over its own people in the newly devolved centres of power - particularly in Wales and London. The lobbyist scandal, Drapergate, with its suggestions of an ethically challenged New Labour periphery, set the scene for accusations about cronvism. This may well have contributed to the downfall of Peter Mandelson, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, when, right. at the year's end, his third of a million personal home loan from Geoffrey Robinson MP was revealed.

For liberals, the low point of New Labour in office was the unthinking populism, which informed the treatment dished out to the author Gitta Sereny in April. This came after The Observer newspaper revealed that Sereny had paid Mary Bell - convicted of murder when a child - for helping with the book Cries Unheard. The highlight was the detention of the unrepentant former dictator of Chile, Augusto Pinochet, despite the deluge of misinformation put out by his apologists in Britain

As far as Britain is concerned, however, 1998 may also be written up by our successors as the year of one big lost opportunity. Because this was the year when, politics apart, we really should have voted to join the euro. For once we could have been in there from the start; and it begins next week, you know. Or did you turn over from the news to watch Jerry partly because Tony Blair felt Springer's chat show instead?

We can't be like the last lot' – or can we?

"WE CAN'T be like the last tary, Jack Straw, was identified lot." Peter Mandelson's parting on 2 January as the minister plea to Tony Blair on the night of his resignation crystallised perfectly the crisis that now cannabis from a tabloid faces the Government at the

opposition led a crusade against Tory sleaze that bordered on the evangelical, the past year's string of sexual and financial scandals has surprised even the most cynical of observers.

This week's revelation about Peter Mandelson's £373,000 loan from Geoffrey Robinson was just the latest in a series of stories that left the Government open to the charge not just of impropriety, but also that most damaging political sin of the modern age

hypocrisy.
The Prime Minister's halo had already begun to slip in the wake of the Formula One/Ecclestone affair, but the combination of Sandline, Lobbygate and Ron Davies's nocturnal exploits on Clapham Common ensured that the whiff of sleaze was never very far away.

The year got off to a shaky art when the Home Secrewhose son had been arrested for buying £10 worth of

Seventeen-year-old William For a Labour Party that in Straw received a caution from the police and his father won widespread respect for the way in which he handled the affair.

By coming clean early about the issue, New Labour had proved it was different from the Tories and the Blair government remained untarnished. Even so, the incident was a prescient indication that Labour was just as fallible as the Tories on questions of personal morality.

The first scandal of real substance surfaced in May, when it was alleged that the Foreign Office had colluded with a British firm of mercenaries to help restore the democratically elected President of Sierra Leone. Peter Penfold, the British High Commissioner, and other FO officials were accused of knowingly breaching the United Nations arms embargo in offering assistance to Sandline International.

THE RETURN OF SLEAZE, BY PAUL WAUGH controversy as a "hoo-hah" as the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, came under systematic newspaper reporter.

pressure to resign.

Mr Cook refused to quit and his Prime Minister stood by him, but the affair guaranteed that Labour's muchhyped "ethical foreign policy" was effectively dead in the

waters off Freetown. Trouble flared again in the summer in the form of Derek Draper, a former aide to Mr Mandelson and self-confessed "big mouth" who bragged to undercover reporters that he had exclusive access to the heart of government.

"There are 17 people who count. And to say that I am intimate with every one of them is the understatement of the century," he said.

Mr Draper resigned from lobbying firm GPC Market Access following allegations that he had offered access to ministers and insider information in return for cash.

The incident forced the Government to tighten up rules on Tony Blair dismissed the lobbying and gave credence to



Peter Mandelson: Tarnished Labour's clean image

cronies" were receiving preferential treatment.

count at £250 an hour" resurrected images of the disgraced Tory MP Neil Hamilton receiving brown envelopes stuffed with cash in return for asking Commons questions.

Tory claims that "Tony's off the juvenile braggadocio, but Mr Draper's words revealed for the first time that Mr Draper's boast that "I there may be something rotten just want to stuff my bank ac- at the heart of New Labour.

However it was sex not finance, that grabbed the nation's attention when the Secretary of State for Wales, Ron Davies, presented Mr Blair with his first cabinet above the fray, his own Teflon premiership unaffected by the Ministers easily shrugged resignation in October. Mr mini-scandals to have sur-

Davies quit his post after he ad-Clapham Common in "a moment of madness" before being robbed at knifepoint.

The Caerphilly MP denied allegations that he had been involved in a homosexual encounter or drug use, but his failure to disclose all the details of the incident dragged out the affair.

In November, Nick Brown, the Agriculture Minister, was forced by the News of the World to admit his homosexuality. Mr Brown's swift admission indicated a mature approach that seemed to suggest that Labour really was different from the Tories.

Mr Mandelson was then himself "outed" by the former Tory MP Matthew Parris, and later denied stories that he had visited gay bars on a Department of Trade and Industry tour of Rio de Janeiro.

So far, Mr Blair had shown a Clintonesque ability to rise

his friend Geoffrey Robinson. as the party of clean politics. the Paymaster-General and millionaire businessman acmitted picking up a man from cused of benefiting from the distinctly Tory-like arrangement of an offshore trust.

The murky world of Mr Robinson's finances seemed the antithesis of New Labour's commitment to transparency and fair-dealing, but Mr Blair remained steadfastly loyal.

Even revelations about the MP's links to companies run by the former tycoon, Robert Maxwell, did not threaten his position. It was only when Mr Robinson was forced to issue an apology in the House of Commons in November, for failing to declare directorships in the MPs' register of interests, that his resignation finally looked probable.

Downing Street whispered that Mr Robinson was going to go quietly over the Christmas break. Yet just when the Government could be forgiven for thinking that the year of revelations was finally over, the

bombshell landed. Last week's disclosure that Mr Mandelson had failed to declare the Robinson loan blew over the festive break

faced to date. He had stuck by a huge hole in Labour's image

The Prime Minister's own personal judgement, in standing by Mr Robinson and failing to sack Mr Mandelson, came into question. New Labour was portraved as a naive dilettante that had been seduced by business and wealth. The Blair

honeymoon was finally over. More secrets are sure to emerge in the new year when both a biography of Mr Mandelson and a book by Robin Cook's former wife, Margaret, will be published.

Mr Mandelson also faces a possible inquiry into his mortgage application and there remain several unanswered ouestions about Mr Robinson's financial affairs and his connections with other Labour MPs.

Yet despite its year of troubles, it appears that the Government's Teflon coating has only slightly worn. Latest polls put Labour at 54 per cent. more than double the Conservatives' tally. If he was still around, that is a statistic that the Sultan of Spin would be planting on every MP's pager WHEN BILL Clinton was elect- Linda, the ex-military wife with ed president in 1992, Americans a sideline in tape-recording ing drama, a low comedy alepisode was laced with the aphrodisiac of power.

In the White House were Bill and Hillary – he, a small-town powerful man in the world, she the one woman with the rethong and brought him pizza. and made the word "intern" the cue for global snickering.

knew he had a past. But they and a grudge in her heart. could never in their wildest From the office of the indeimaginings have expected a pendent counsel came Ken, saga like the knockabout epic arch-pedant and judge, who of 1998. From January to De- wheeled his dustbin to his subcember; they - and the world - urban kerb by night and huntwere spectators to a rip-roar- ed down Bill by day. And then did have a relationship with Ms ways a hair's breadth away hair and the nose job - who from high tragedy, a perpetual brought them all together: the

There were bit parts aplenty and there were props galore: the gifts, the cigars. And, of Arkansan become the most course, "that dress", the navy blue dress from Gap with its tell-tale stain that Monica kept demptive clout to save him. in her wardrobe. "Life was so From Beverly Hills came Mon-much simpler, wasn't it," ica, the Valley Girl with the pert snarled an enemy lawyer before beret, who showed Bill her Congress, "before they found

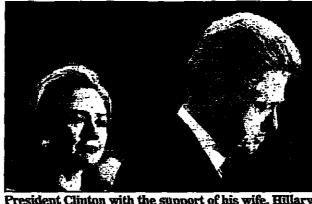
unswayed by Bill's charms.

It was a drama neatly paced through the passage of the IMPEACHMENT OF A PRESIDENT BY MARY DEJEVSKY

did not have sexual relations with that woman, Ms Lewinsky" - and the hang-dog confession of August - "Indeed, I there was Paula - she of the big Lewinsky that was not appropriate; indeed, it was wrong. It spanned Monica's disem-

soap opera whose every only woman in America bodied phrases, her "Big Creep" and "Bubba", through the volumes of her complete admissions and, finally, in November, her voice. We saw Linda saying tearfully, "I am you", to justify her betrayal, Monica's "mom" near collapse from the agony of her testimony, and the new-style Paula waving a million-dollar cheque that she never received.

From the man who brought you "I smoked, but I did not inhale", came the redefining of



President Clinton with the support of his wife, Hillary, vows to carry on after the impeachment vote

as the President wrestled with Iraq and Kosovo and the Middle East, the pensions system and health reform, he was also refining his testimony and con-

sulting his lawyers.

told the worst - and no presidential confession could expunge that stain. Congress came into its own,

grave and divided. It all reached its climax in the double crisis of December.

the split-screen surreality of a four-day war and a three-day impeachment. It was a political thriller that involved the Congress, the people, their President and the Constitution. Republicans dreamt of Watergate glory and vengeance. They told a tale of broken oaths and trust betrayed, of a chief law of-

and cried "impeach".
"This is not Watergate," shouted back the Democrats. "It's an extramarital affair." They were "disappointed" and "sad", but not "betrayed". And when the vote and the verdict came, they dismissed them as illegitimate. For Bill Clinton it was a triumph of survival, and the ultimate disgrace.

When all was said and done. the story of Bill and Monica and the US presidency might not

sip, Matt Drudge, who plucked a Newsweek story from the "hold-for-more-evidence" pile

Within a week, last January, Bill Clinton's goose seemed to be cooked. If even some of what was rumoured was true - the affair with the "intern", the White House trysts, the semen-stained dress - the wise ficer who did not uphold the law, men and women of Washington were unanimous: Bill Clinton was finished.

But it was all true - and more. And Bill is still here. All the forecasts proved false. He would have to resign: he refused. He would lose the elections for the Democrats: they won. He would escape impeachment: he was impeached.

His survival showed premillennial America split in its soul A grown-up Sixties generation had taken its live-and-

have seen the light of day but let-live credo to the V for an Internet squirrel of a gosthoughts. Affairs were all: but not with an intern. S trysts could be tolerated

and triggered a national chase. not in the White House. Lie about sex if you will you will), but do not d

under oath. The President was pres over a shifting moral lands where uptight conserva and spent revolutionaries tled for the high ground, wanted it both ways.

And it is not over yet. As first anniversary of the Bill Monica show looms, the ne and probably last - instalt is at hand. Will Bill stand and could the Senate ren him? Will his public sup hold up? Will the Constitu endure? And how many n highly placed adulterers wi ruined in his wake?

Tune in next year. Sa

Finally, a future that can defeat the past

PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND BY DAVID MCKITTRICK

FOR Northern Ireland, 1998 was a year of extraordinary violence and extraordinary political progress, a year in which hand with huge strides towards

It was a year so filled with inabsorb the lasting significance and scale of developments was pass attended two funerals. almost without precedent, even for Northern Ireland.

Movement and change were of a positive nature, so that as the year ends hopes remain high of more progress next year The goal of having all or almost all of the main elements working together in a new coalition government now seems within grasp, assuming another crisis or two can be negotiated.

Yet nothing is guaranteed and, even though much progress was made, no one is really celebrating a year in which more than 50 people were added to the death toll, 29 of them in the Umagh bombi August. It may or may not be of consolation to the bereaved families to think, as most observers do, that the bombing has made all thoughts of any new sustained campaign of violence virtually inconceivable.

That word "virtually" is there because Northern Ireland is always the most unpredictable of places, as the beginning of 1998 illustrated. Just days after last Christmas, the killing within the Maze prison of the loyalist leader Billy "King Rat" Wright sparked off a furious cycle of retaliation that left 21 people dead.

The Wright shooting created military turbulence, which threatened the multi-party talks then dragging on at Stormont. Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, took the unprecedented step of going into their H-block to meet them.

off: the meeting went well and the prisoners agreed to give the peace process another chance. But it did not end the violence, which continued in March with

This was the murder of two friends, Philip Allen, a Protes-Catholic, shot by loyalists in the

tomed to violent death, but Poyntzpass had remained largely untouched by the Troubles.

The two friends were having appalling tragedy went hand in a quiet drink when loyalist gunmen burst in and fired repeatedly into their bodies and those of two other people. Mr Allen cident that it is still difficult to had just asked Mr Trainor to be his best man, but instead of a of it all, for the sheer number wedding the people of Poyntz-

Those responsible, and those who carried out most of the year's killings, wished to the order of the day, much of it stop the peace process in its tracks. But although these and other killings induced fear and dismay, they never stopped the process: indeed, most of the negotiators closeted in Stormont

The Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, lost a family member during the year, when his niece's husband was killed by loyalists. A Sinn Fein colleague, Alex Maskey, was almost killed several years earlier when loyalists blasted him with a shotgun, causing him to lose half a kidney, half his stomach and part of his bowel.

With histories such as these, the talks were never going to be easy, or friendly, or quickly resolved; and so it proved. There was much obstruction, much dislike and great distrust. Yet they stayed at the table and in the end achieved what many had thought impossible: agreement. On 10 April, most of the par-



Nobel Peace Prize winners David Trimble, left, and John Hume, in Oslo for the award Knut Fjeldstad/AP

seemed to strengthen their resolve not to be deflected.

This was true even though the violence reached right into the talks building itself, toucha wave of political and para- ing key negotiators. The Ulster Unionist MP Ken Maginnis, a former member of the Ulster Defence Regiment, sat across When loyalist prisoners in the the table from Sinn Fein, many Maze voted to withhold support of whose representatives had from the peace process, the served time in prison for IRA offences. Mr Maginnis lost several close friends, shot or blown up by the republicans.

Gary McMichael, leader of It was a gamble but it paid the Ulster Democratic Party, political wing of the Ulster Defence Association, had lost his father to an IRA booby-trap bomb, and at one stage was himself an IRA target. The a double killing of extraordinary SDLP, led by John Hume and Seamus Malion, had also suffered. One of their members, Paddy Wilson, had been killed by tant, and Damien Trainor, a the UDA in the 1970s: the man who killed him sat with them in Co Armagh village of Poyntz- the talks, having served a life sentence and been released.

ties signed up to the Good Friday Agreement after a marathon overnight session. Unionists and republicans both had major reservations, yet in the end the Unionist leader, David Trimble, and Mr Adams felt they could sign up to the new accord. It was nobody's

could live with it A complex document full of checks, balances and trade-offs, it set out a blueprint for a new constitutional settlement. There would be a new assembly in Belfast, headed by an executive formed by the largest parties; there would be new north-south institutions and new arrangements linking Belfast with Scot-

land and Wales. All parties promised to work towards arms decommissioning while new commissions would study future policing requirements and the need for emergency legislation. New bodies would safeguard human in suggesting that next year's

controversially, prisoners from subscribing paramilitary groups could expect release

within two years. It was an extraordinary and possibly historic document since, if it works, it will provide a new template for co-existence in Northern Ireland. The document's emergence triggered a period of intense political activity with dual referendums north and south of the border, quickly followed by elections to a new Belfast assembly.

The northern referendum and the elections produced a near-identical result, with just over 70 per cent voting for the new accord. Clearly not everyone had signed up: well over 90 per cent of nationalists were in support but, within the Unionist community, a bare majority was in favour.

That division within Unionism has helped to ensure that the decommissioning issue, which is essentially a metaphor for mistrust of republicanism, continues to beset the process.

ists believed they had found, in July's Drumcree marching confrontation, an issue that would both assert Protestant parading rights and, with luck, dash the agreement as well. But it all went wrong for them when a petrol-bomb attack burnt to death three young boys. After that horror most of the protesting Orangemen went home. though a hard core of Portadown loyalists say they will never give up. They seem to mean it for even yesterday, Christmas Day, some remained camped out in that frosty field, saying they will wait for as long as it takes to get down the Catholic Garvaghy Road.

The "Real IRA," a breakaway from the main organisa. tion, also resolved that it would first choice but most felt they never give up and kept up a campaign of bombings, which culminated in the Omagh atrocity. It very quickly became evident that the killings had swept away much of the lingering toleration for violent acts. Just as the Good Friday Agreement transformed politics, so Omagh seemed to spell the end for large-scale terrorist cam-

paigns. Since then, there have been Nobel peace prizes - for Messrs Hume and Trimble - negotiations and more negotiations. None has been easy, but the desire for peace is palpable, and that is the most hopeful factor



rights and equality while, most crises too will be overcome. Mo Mowlam: Her pursuit of a peace agreement took her into the Maze prison, to win over loyalist prisoners

France gives itself a helpful kick in the pants

built to celebrate a different. Champs-Elysées. bloodier kind of victory.

it nowadays, one almost expects to see a new name engraved alongside the inscriptions of Austerlitz and the other battles: "Stade Saint Denis 1998".

On the night of 12 July, the famous old arch was turned into a projection screen for electricgreen, laser-painted faces of the French footballers who had just won the World Cup.

Each face and each name -

THE ARC de Triomphe was from the crowds blocking the

The next day more than a None the less, walking past million people - five times the jostling happily side by side. number who watch the entire French First Division on a good weekend - blocked the avenue from top to bottom to catch a glimpse of their brown, white and black heroes.

This was a family festival, a national festival. There were babies in prams with their faces painted red, white and blue; there were poodles with tricolours pinned on their collars. Most startling of all, there but especially that of Zinedine were white, brown and black Zidane - drew a huge cheer Frenchmen and women

THE WORLD CUP BY JOHN LICHFIELD

Arab youngsters from the suburbs were waving the French flag, probably for the first time

France has always been a country in which politics is made on the streets. The crowds that turned out to celebrate the French victories in the World Cup semi-final and final were the largest on the streets of Paris since the Liberation in 1944. They were the most politically significant since the student revolts of 1968.

seem hard to substantiate. The seriously as last year. French economic recovery is beginning to stutter-although this month of Jean-Marie Le the boom in domestic spending Pen's far-right, racist National

from worse problems. The traditional winter vio- immigrants, born in the troulence in the troubled suburbs of bled, northern suburbs of

SOUNDBITE OF 1998

'It depends on what the meaning of "is" is' Bill Clinton

the French, intellectual left.

ical significance - of the World Can the implosion earlier Cup victory is real none the less. It snapped a negative, inencouraged by the World Cup Front be the doing of Zinedine ward looking national mood, victory has saved the country Zidane, star of the French which was long overdue for team and the son of Algerian snapping. It allowed French people to celebrate being French, without complexes. It allowed them to reject the cheap anti-immigrant propaganda of the NF. It allowed

Politically significant? Six French cities has broken out Marseilles? Would that life months later, the claim may once more, though so far not as were so simple. The significance - the polit-

going abroad, without losing make something of their lives." their Frenchness. them to reject the defeatism of

in France that the country modern world, in spite of the fact, or even because of the fact, that it is more cultured than the rest of the planet. Part of the significance of

the French World Cup victory is that it was based on hard work, muscle, multi-racialism and team work as much as traditional Gallic flair. Another

the troubled inner suburbs of Triomphe.

There is, or was, a conviction Paris, I asked a football-mad, second-generation Algerian was doomed to decline in the what the World Cup victory had meant for France. "On one level, nothing," said Hammer, a 33-year-old, youth worker. "All the problems here are the same as before. On another level, everything.

"For the kids here to see a man like Zidane starring in a team which looked, racially, like a group of youngsters on part is that it was founded on these streets, it gives them players, who blossomed after some hope that they too, can

That alone is worth a On a recent visit to one of new inscription on the Arc de

'HE INDEPENDEN'

Slump that gave us all the shivers

THE WORLD ECONOMY BY HAMISH MCRAE

quarter of the world plunged into recession while the rest cantered blithely on. So much for there being a single global economy.

It was the year when many countries experienced dellation, yet the falling prices of goods in the shops were in stark contrast to the soaring price of shares on the financial markets.

Despite a serious wobble in August, most markets ended the year higher than they had begun. And it was a year when strings of companies across the developed world merged and announced job losses, yet in those same countries unemployment is the so-called "Goldilocks fell and total employment continued to rise.

So it was not a bad year, unless you lived in East Asia. For those parts of the world economy that went down, the scale of the catastrophe was far beyond anything in post-war memory. The slump in East Asia was, for more jobs have been created most people in the region, their first experience of recession. Although the first signs of slump were evident in mid-1997, hardanyone glimpsed how bad the downturn might become.

A year ago Japanese officials were still proclaiming that the economy would grow this year, albeit slowly - the official Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development forecast was for 1.5 per cent growth. The outcome looks like minus 2.6 per cent, with no end of recession in sight.

Or take Hong Kong. Flush with the self-confidence of the altogether. Now it has had its

Old dictator

shakes the

world again

FOR THE world economy, it was first recession since the war with a year of astounding contrast the economy shrinking by neary 5 per cent.

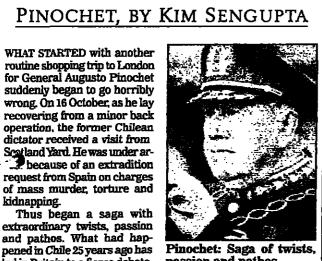
For some other countries of the region the tale has been truly dreadful. The saddest case must be Indonesia, where the economy has shrunk by over 15 per cent, and domestic consumption has fallen by nearly one-third. Russia, another economic disaster zone, has seen its output fall "only" 7 per cent this year.

The other extreme was the United States. Could the boom continue into its eighth year? The answer was a resounding yes. The US economy has grown by 3.5 per cent. Unemployment has fallen, inflation has stayed low and crime has fallen too. It economy" - not too hot and not too cold, but just right.

Here in Britain we have had a modest success. There was no recession. The economy has grown by 2.7 per cent (against a forecast 2.2 per cent). Inflation has been lower than forecast, and the current account has been more or less in balance.

It has been a good year for most of continental Europe too. Both Germany and France have had a year of low inflation and enough growth to start cutting into double-digit unemployment rates. Ireland, Sweden and Spain have done better still.

One common feature round One common feature round the globe was deflation. Prices in Japan have been falling for in Japan have been falling for years but in the past year the phenomenon spread. Even in Britain, where the Bank of England was repeatedly jacking up interest rates in an effort andover to China, Hong Kong to cap inflation, some prices thought it could avoid recession have been falling, including phone calls and clothes.



led in Britain to a fierce debate. passion and pathos pushing aside the politics of the favour of immunity but then the centre and bringing back the old House of Lords voted by three divisions between left and right. in the immediate aftermath to two that the former dictator should face justice. Then that of the arrest, Peter Mandelson decision was overturned bebecame the unlikely hero of the cause Lord Hoffmann had left by saying it was "gut failed to disclose his links with wrenching" that "such a brutal

continue has been popular.

Amnesty International. dictator" should be claiming Comatic immunity. This was, So legally we are now almost back to square one. But it would however, the first and last pubbe wrong to think nothing had lic cry from the radical past of changed. Jack Straw resisted New Labour. From now on the party line was that it was a great pressure and refused to purely legal matter. free the general, becoming a second unlikely hero of the left. According to opinion polls, his Past and present Conservative politicians, on the other hand, were outraged. Baroness decision to let the legal process

Thatcher demanded that General Pinochet be freed at once. General Pinochet's opponents are exploring other legal avenues, including the possi-William Hague and his front bench, after a bout of initial bility of trying him for torture dithering, took up the cry. There was apprehension in under the Criminal Justice Act. Washington that an open trial could lead to a public airing of the And there is nothing to say the next panel of the lords will not also rule against him. The one CIA's role in the Pinochet coup. salient lesson of the Pinochet af-fair is to expect the unexpected. The legal process began with the High Court ruling in

SOUNDBITES OF 1998

'It was inevitable the Titanic was going to set sail, that doesn't mean it was a good idea to be on it William Hague on joining the single currency





Left, a Brazilian trader reacting as the Sao Paulo stock market takes the fallout from Russia's turmoil. Right, a Muscovite checking her ever-shrinking money

thev were a vear ago. Companies that used to jack up prices whenever costs rose have found they can no longer do this - and thus a wave of fear has been sweeping though the business world. One way in which that fear has manifested itself is in mergers. It is not the only rea-

Indeed, producer prices are son for the mega-mergers, but lower in most countries than a principal one. The areas affected - including oil, cars and banking - were those where competitive pressure has been strongest. Suddenly, giant companies such as Chrysler and Mobil felt they needed to merge

to ease the pain of downsizing. That pain is being felt by their

been hard hit by job losses in the fall-out from bank mergers, but and worldwide. Fortunately, in most countries growth was strong enough to absorb the peo-

Financial markets found this confusing. On the one hand slower inflation encouraged a fall in long-term interest rates.

But growing evidence of a The annual meetings of the Insqueeze on company profits, with bad news on Russian debts. led to litters in August that saw share prices in most markets fall by as much as 20 per cent.

The volatile markets caused some casualties, most notably the near-collapse of the US fund managers Long-Term Capital Management (LTCM).

ternational Monetary Fund and World Bank in October took place in an atmosphere of crisis World prosperity seemed fragile. Then - quite suddenly - the litters seemed to be over. LTCM was rescued and share

concerns ringing as loud as ex-

pressions of confidence. The main worry of 12 months ago continues: could the rest of the world catch the East Asian disease? But now there are new ones. Will the euro be a success? Is the millennium bug a threat? Will Britain hit recession? My The year has ended with better than many people fear. I

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Israelis trample on corpse of peace

THE MIDDLE EAST BY ROBERT FISK

journalistic clichés to know this would be the last year of the Middle East "peace process".

In January, it had to be "put back on track". By spring, it had to be "resurrected". By au-World Service's correspondent in Jerusalem was at last forced to admit it was "dying".

Variously regarded as a railway train, a buried corpse, a and eternal capital, he told the sinking Titanic - anything rather than admit the truth-the to take away Israel's sover-Oslo Agreement was in reality dead the moment it was signed. The Wye Agreement, dutifully signed by Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat in October, was merely part of the wake.

When the Israeli Prime Minister formally declared Wye "suspended" just before Christmas, it was an acknowledgment that the game was up. There would be no more talks with the Palestinians - but of course, that didn't stop further Jewish settlement-building on Arab land, the continued confiscation of Palestinian identification papers and the continued destruction of Palestinian homes.

By the year's end the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader ruled over a garbage-tip Bantustan of slivered towns and refugee camps with the help of 11 secret police forces, prison torture, censorship and total democratic parliament

The Middle East peace was supposed to have been found- screamed the Israelis. When ed on UN Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967, which called for Israeli withdrawal from oc- tremists" or "zealots". Double cupied Arab land in return for the security of all states (including Israel) in the region.

Oslo allowed Israel to renegotiate 242, to decide which bits of occupied land it might "give" to the Palestinians and which bits it would keep. The occupied West Bank was henceforth to be called "disputed", which meant the whole place was up for grabs. Which is why the Israelis started building a new settlement at Jebel Abu Ghoneim east of Jerusalem - now called by its Hebrew name of Har Homa - on the basis that Oslo didn't say they couldn't build

more settlements on Arab land. And which is why Mr Netanyahu's new Foreign Minis- and he could forget the "terter, fresh from securing the rorist" violence of Israeli setish settlers in the West Bank to no control – with the help of the

YOU HAD only to listen to the Each Palestinian objection was treated as an attempt to destroy the "peace process". When Mr Arafat suspended peace talks be-Ghoneim/Har Homa settlement, he was accused of wanting to abtumn, it had to be "salvaged". rogate peace. When Palestinians By year's end, even the BBC protested violently against further settlements, they were told they were trying to kill peace.

When Mr Netanyahu declared Jerusalem the unified Palestinians they had no right eign capital - even though the future of Jerusalem, like settlements and Palestinian refugees, was supposed to be part of the final status talks in the Oslo agreement next May.

But when Mr Arafat, sick and humiliated, scorned by increasing numbers of his own people, suggested he might declare a Palestinian state if there was no May settlement, the Israelis turned on him vengefully.

First, the Israelis said, the Palestine National Council had to renounce - for the second time - the clause in its charter that calls for the destruction of Israel. And only hours before it obediently did so, Israel produced more conditions: no more threats to declare a Palestinian state or violent protests against the peace accord.

Inevitably, the violent Palestinian Hamas movement, still dedisdain for his people's would-be manding an Islamic state for all of Palestine, continued its war against Israel. "Terrorists." Jewish settlers shot down Palestinians they were called "exstandards have also been a foundation of the Oslo Agreement.

But the "peace process" is not about fairness or justice; it revolves around just how little the Palestinians will accept in return for being a client kingdom of Israel. The Wye Agreement - presided over by the fickle leadership of Bill Clinton - restated all the Oslo conditions that Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat had failed to meet but added a new pro-Israeli clause, which heaped the blame for all violence on to Palestinians.

Mr Arafat was enjoined to hunt down "terrorists", "terrorist cells" and the "terrorist structure" of "terror groups" -"seize every hilltop they can". CIA. Palestinian jails began to

fill up again with "Islamists" and the PLO's torturers went back to work with the CIA's blessing.

Mr Clinton used the opporcause of the Jebel Abu tunity of "saving the peace" to embellish his own failed statesmanship, accepting almost all Israel's demands - even considering the release of an Israeli spy who had been paid to steal American military secrets while rewarding Mr Arafat with

a visit to Gaza. For most of the year, the Palestinians burnt American flags. In December, they paused to fly the US flag over Gaza to greet President Clinton as he stepped on to the soil of "Palestine". But within four days - once they realised that the "friend" of Palestine was abandoning them again - the Palestinians burnt the Ameri-

Even before Mr Clinton had left the Middle East, Mr Netanyahu refused to carry out further troop withdrawals that Israel had promised and then suspended the Wye Agreement altogether - no objections from the Americans, of course.

Unable any longer to balance his refusal to abide by the terms of the Oslo accord with the even more bellicose policies

of extremists in his cabinet, Mr Netanyahu called an election, which will suspend all relations with the Palestinians for more than three months - an effective death notice for Oslo,

Syria, which saw through the facade of Oslo from the start, still sticks to Resolution 242 as a foundation of peace and the return by Israel of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. And so does Lebanon, where Syrian-supported guerrillas from the Hizbollah movement continue to attack Israeli troops occupying the southern part of Lebanon - and whose withdrawal was supposed to have been completed in 1978 under

the terms of UN Resolution 425. Israel condemns these "terrorist attacks", demanding yet more conditions that do not appear in the UN resolution.

If Labour takes power in the

April Israeli elections, say the

optimists, maybe the "peace process" will be put back on track again. But the dead cannot be resurrected and by April, the explosion that all America's friends in the region - Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, King Hussein of Jordan and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia - have warned of may well have come to pass.



Benjamin Netanyahu, right, the Israeli Prime Minister, in discussion with the Palestinian leader. Yasser Arafat, centre, and an interpreter, at the Wye Plantation in Maryland

LOOKING FOR THE LOWEST SALE PRICES?

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TEFAL HOOVER

Traumas of a nation in utter collapse

INDONESIA'S FALL BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

ONE WEEK last May the inhabitants of the world's fourth largest nation, a country of rich natural resources, physical beauty and unique human diversity, threw off a corrupt dictator and became free for the first time in 32 years. Within weeks, political prisoners were freed, banned magazines were reopened and preparations were being made for democra-

tic elections. In a cruel year for Asia, the changes in Indonesia should have been the one piece of good news. But few in Jakarta look to next year with anything less than dark trepidation: delight at President Suharto's removal and the sudden freedoms it generated have been overshadowed at every turn by economic crisis, political uncertainty and the reawakening of deadly internal conflicts.

The last time Indonesia witnessed such chaos and such freedom (in the mid 1960s, just before the creeping coup that bought Suharto to power), it was followed by a period of terrible bloodshed. The fear now is of some kind of a repeat of that cycle for apart from new liberties, the defining characteristic of this year has been violence.

It began in February with a scattering of riots in remote villages in Java, provoked by food shortages and price increases and directed, as such violence so often is, against Indonesia's and perhaps terminal, distress.

Chinese minority. With increasing boldness, student demonstrations mounted against President Suharto across the country. At one of these, on 12 May at Jakarta's Trisakti University, soldiers fired live rounds, killing five young demonstrators. So began two days of violence and unforgettable physical horror. In 20 different areas of Jakarta, mobs of ordinary people set about looting, smashing and burning their own neighbourhoods. Again, it was the Chinese minority which suffered the most - later, it became clear that dozens, perhaps as many as 160, Chinese women, had been tortured and raped during the riots. In three separate shopping centres, more than a thousand people were burnt to death, trapped by their own fire

in the shops they were looting. Within a week, Suharto had resigned, in favour of his vicepresident, the eccentric and unpopular B J Habibie, who has passed new election laws. He announced democratic elections for next summer. But without popular legitimacy and saddled with Asia's worst economic crisis. Habibie has proved incapable of uniting the country and quelling the violence.

Nobody appears truly in control of what is taking place, and the violence may be the visible symptom of a nation in deep,



'This is not a time for soundbites. We've left them at home. I feel the hand of history upon our shoulders...' Tony Blair at Northern Ireland talks



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2ace We thought about little else for 12 solid months

SEX MADE headlines in 1998 as never before. It was the year of Viagra and Bill Clinton's cigar and Ron Davies' walk on the wilder side of Clapham Common. The year when parents everywhere struggled to explain to children exactly what oral sex might be and that, no. it has nothing to do with flossing. It was a year when mothers turned to daughters to ask about the new facts of life. "So what exactly is phone sex, dear?" they inquired as we tried to change the subject.

In fact, looking back over the year, this was not just the Year of Sex. This was the Year of Unremitting Sex. And, because life is kind to beadline writers. there was also more than a little bit of Drugs thrown in and thank you George Michael and Mick Jagger - some Rock and Roll too. In the end, everyone was trying to get in on the act. Even Tony Blair, the ultimate non-sex machine. claimed in his Mansion House speech that economic stability was sexy. But we knew better than to believe anything so kinky:

And that is the other thing

THE YEAR OF SEX BY ANN TRENEMAN

that the people knew better all along. The politicians cared. Oh yes they did! They apologised and grovelled and wanted to explain. And the pundits cared too. Oh yes they did! They wanted us to know exactly how many gays are in the British Cabinet. "Are we being run by a gay mafia?" demanded The Sun on 9 November. The answer came back quickly. It was not "yes" or "no" but "who cares?"

a joke and, between Viagra and Zippergate, there was no shortage of those. Freud would have approved. Viagra was introduced in America in April and quickly became an unavoidable topic. Men could not get enough of the stuff. Neither could the media which is, by chance, run by men. We learnt that two-and-a-half million British men suffer from impotence and a search was launched to find them toddly, none was ever in the room). In the end, they told all. In fact,

periences on day-time television. The whole thing was exhausting and probably a very good thing all round.

I'm not sure the same can be said for sex and politics. Bill Clinton's problems began on 21 January when The Washington Post reported that independent counsel Kenneth Start was investigating whether the President had an affair with an intern. Soon we knew her name At first it all seemed a bit of and it was Monica. The name will never be the same. Nor will we. In the beginning there was confusion.

> There was quite a lot of talk that this was not actually an affair at all. Certainly Bill seemed to believe this. He declared he had never had sexual relations with "that woman". Perhaps he was lying or perhaps he thought that oral sex was not really "sexual relations" as the Bible knows it.

Monica disagreed. She thought it was more than an affair, she thought it was love. they wouldn't shut up. Three This is probably the most about sex in 1998. It turned out British couples had Viagra ex- under-reported sex detail of

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ica did it for love.

There were periods of respite in late spring and early summer. Things livened up again when George Michael was arrested in April for "lewd behaviour" at the public lavatories in a Los Angeles park.

The Starr report was released in September. It was Xrated. He denied this. He claimed the report wasn't about sex. It was about lying and perjury and hypocrisy. But anyone who could read knew better. There was the unlit cigar, the snapping thong, the "oralanal contact"

Until the autumn, sex had been mostly a spectator sport in Britain. Then Ron Davies, Secretary of State for Wales, decided to go for a late-night walk on Clapham Common. He resigned without telling us much bout what actually happened. He said he was sorry and told the House: "We are what we are. We are all different, the product both of our genes and experiences." The tabloids

News of the World outed the Agriculture minister, Nick Brown. No one cared. Then a gay journalist outed a member of the Cabinet on Newsnight. Jeremy Paxman was morti-

fied. Peter Mandelson was not.

By the end of the year the pundits had decided there was too much sex around. I'm not sure that we, the people, care that much. The politicians still don't get that. In America they are killing themselves off in a moralistic frenzy while Bill Clinton's approval ratings soar. In Britain, greed has proved to be more interesting than sex.

In fact, the real story of the Year of Sex is not the dirt and details but our reaction to them. Professor Robert Worcester of Mori says this has been a watershed year in which people showed that they can separate public politics from private lives. Ordinary people seem to understand what their leaders do not: that some things are complicated and personal and, in the end, private.

This was the year when the moralists tried to undo the Sixties - and failed. So far.



That shot of Lewinsky embracing Clinton in 1996, published widely in 1998

The death of Yeltsin's dream

THIS WAS the year in which the West saw the death of its Russian dream. Words such as "reform" and "free market" to even more abject poverty. became as enfeebled as Boris

A year ago Mr Yeltsin's government and its western supporters could at least brandish several concrete achievements. A stable currency. Low inflation. A small, but thriving, stock market. These have now fallen apart. The end came in August

when Russia abandoned its efforts to defend the currency (despite billions of IMF dollars), and defaulted on its internal debt. The banking system cle led to his sacking. Into his seized up, slamming its doors on millions of depositors. The rouble crashed to less than a third of its value. Saddest of all

RUSSIA'S CRISIS BY PHIL REEVES of western remedies. Mr Pri-

Only five months earlier Mr Yeltsin had recruited an unheard-off, 35-year-old energy minister to replace his veteran premier, Viktor Chernomyrdin. Sergei Kiriyenko was a picture of a bewildered bank clerk. Yet within weeks, western diplomats were privately hailing his government, with its team of hard-headed market econo-

Russia's post-Soviet history. Not for long. August's debaseat came the weathered archpragmatist and former Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, and a "nomenklatura" cabinet

mists, as the most promising in

makov is now running the show. How could it be otherwise? Mr Yeltsin started the year with a respiratory infection, and was regularly troubled by illness and bouts of confusion.Though he may make it to the end of his term in 2000, history seems certain to show that the Yeltsin era fizzled out

So what does 1999 hold? There is precious little cause for optimism. As the rouble printing presses roll, inflation will worsen and, with it, the economic pressure on an already deeply beleaguered population. GDP next year is expected to

on the rise. The Communists may not have expanded their (frozen) electoral base but they are in triumphant mood, savouring the rout of the pro-western reformers". Democracy is making no real

headway in Russia's regions. This year saw an attempt to kill Georgia's president, Eduard Shevardnadze: a deeply flawed election in Azerbaijan, and a crackdown on opposition forces in Kazakhstan. The most depressing event came in St Petersburg with the murder of Galina Starovoitova, standardbearer of liberal democracy.

Was there anything to celebrate? Yes, but not much. Mr

feated Mr Yeltsin over his choice of a replacement for Mr Kiriyenko, a positive step in a nation where the constitution vests huge powers in the president

And, although Mr Primakov far from the ideal figure to lead Russia from its benighted state, he is not the knee-jerk Soviet, the "hardline spy master" that some in the West portray him to be.

The coming year will see an acceleration in the search for a successor to Boris Yeltsin. The only other candidates who stand a chance are the Communist, Gennady Zyuganov; Moscow's mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, and General Alexander Lebed.

But they are much more alarming, to western liberal democratic eyes, than the wilv







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LORDS ABOLITION BY ANDREW GRICE

THE CHEEKY Christmas card joke was on the Tories for most from the Tory Opposition in the Lords shows a cartoon of Tony Blair next to a half-demolished Lords building. A workman than expected. tells him: "So far so good. Cabinet ministers are con-

Prime Minister. Now what?" The card was intended to poke fun at Mr Blair's reluctance to spell out his long-term reform plans for the second chamber. Unfortunately, the

of 1998 as Labour's plans to demolish the rights of hereditary peers had a smoother passage

vinced that the Tory-dominated hereditaries signed their own death warrants, helping Mr Blair to end 900 years of what he called "feudal domination".

on five occasions Labour's sensationally sacked by William Lord Cranborne. At the heart Tory hereditary. Although Mr plans for a proportional system at European Parliament elections. The Bill will go through in the new year but the rebellion played into Mr Blair's hands by bolstering his case for removing the hereditaries.

The second event was even more dramatic. Viscount Cranborne, the hereditary peer and

Hague for secretly carrying on negotiations with Mr Blair about reprieving 91 of the 750 hereditaries until the Government implemented "stage two"

recedented split between the Tory Party leadership in the Commons and the party's 470

of the matter was Mr Hague's desire for his troops to show "zero tolerance" of government legislation, and Lord Cranborne's wish to call off trench warfare in return for saving some of the hereditaries. "Hague wanted us to die in the ditch, but most of us just

Hague's aides insist the public admired the "strong leadership" he showed, many Tory MPs and peers believe the fiasco raised new doubts about whether he is the right man to lead the party into the next general election

Mr Hague's embarrassment may be compounded in the

added to Labour's Bill to scrap the hereditaries' right to sit and vote in the Upper House. The Tory leader may seek to

regain the initiative by outflanking Mr Blair over longterm reform and is believed to be warming to the idea of a fully elected second chamber. Such a move would be opposed by many MPs, since a Lords with more democratic legitimacy would demand greater powers to amend legislation.

Senior Tories are worried that Mr Hague is about to provoke a second toffs' revolt as many Tory life peers would oppose an elected chamber, since they would be out of a job. "It seems Hague is going to make the same mistakes all over again," said one prominent Tory "lifer". "He hasn't consuited us at all, and we are getting very twitchy."

nerable to the charge of wanting a second chamber full of tional overload. "Tony's cronies". A cabinet committee chaired by Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, has discussed plans for a house in which only a third of were supposed to be abolished elected by the voters. Another third could be elected from billed as a "transitional mea-

pian will almost certainly be land assemblies to be set up next year, with the rest ap pointed from the ranks of the resent 500 life peers.

But cabinet sources insist no blueprint has been drawn up. Mr Blair is unlikely to declare Cabinet's hand when a White Paper on "stage two" will be published in the new year to avoid the charge of preempting the Royal Commission, which will be set up shortly. It should produce proposals within a year.

Another by-product is that the second stage could happen much quicker than expected. Until the Cranborne affair, Labour had virtually ruled out further reform until the hereditaries had been removed after the next general election.

Mr Blair has told Labour MPs he hopes the reform will be on the statute book before the election, but many MPs Mr Hague is unrepentant. and peers remain sceptical. He is convinced Mr Blair is vul- Mr Blair is already anxious to avoid the charge of "constitu-

Despite the dramatic events of this autumn, the pace of Lords reform tends to be rather sedate. The hereditaries rights the members were directly under "stage two" of the 1911 Parliament Act, which was among members of the Scot-tish, Welsh and Northern Ire-coming Bill.

Storm that hit the conscience of the world HURRICANE MITCH



A Honduran family in a shelter made from the remains of their house overlooking Tegucigalpa David Rose

THROUGHOUT LATIN America, Mitch the worst disaster in the few are talking at the end of this year about Saddam. Bill or Monica. This will always be known as The Year of Mitch.

It was the hurricane they thought would never come but once it did, it became known as the one that would not go away. It was the fourth strongest hurricane on record. By 1 November most of the damage was done but the world barely took notice: this was the Third World and these were the original banana republics.

Three days after the event we heard hundreds, perhaps thousands, had died in Nicaragua, mostly when a side of Casitas volcano, its crater full of water, collapsed, burying villages. But it was not until a Honduran official spoke of 7,000 dead in his country that the world took notice.

President Bill Clinton at first offered Honduras \$2m or about 20p for every man, woman and child (£1.25m). Long a fiefdom of US banana companies, the military and the CIA, it was understandably offended. As floodwaters receded, officials settled on a vague death-toll of about 10,000 but said a similar number were missing, making try finally on the world's map.

western hemisphere since 23,000 died when a volcanic mudslide buried the Colombian village of Armero in 1985. Mitch's winds first ham-

mered the Bay Islands, off Honduras's north coast, flattening houses on Guanaja island. It was on Guanaja that the first cavalry arrived - the

British Royal Navy. It will be a

long time before the locals for-

get that the Union Jack was the first foreign flag they saw. The Royal Navy and the marines were also first into the badly hit "mosquito coast" of eastern Honduras and Nicaragua, using helicopters to reach Miskito indians trapped

by floodwater When it became clear that the floods had destroyed about 100 bridges in Honduras, the US finally stepped in. It sent several thousand troops to repair the country's ruptured infrastructure.

As the Americans laboured through the Christmas holiday, many Hondurans, their mourning period over, hoped the hurricane's legacy may eventually be positive: better roads and bridges, and a coun-

SOUNDBITE OF 1998

'Dear Tony, I can scarcely believe I am writing this letter to you...' Peter Mandelson's resignation note to Tony Blair

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THE INDEPENDENT YEAR

What were we doing bombing Iraq?

WAR ON SADDAM BY ROBERT FISK

WHY WAS anyone surprised when America and Britain bombed Iraq just before Christmas? We love these Arab dictators when they do what we want by toppling foppish Egyptian or Libyan kings or invading Iran. But when they nationalise the Suez canal, attack Berlin discos or invade Kuwait, we bomb them. That's what neocolonialism is all about.

In the 1930s, the RAF was bombing recalcitrant Iraqis usually Kurds - under the command of the future Arthur "Bomber" Harris. Sixty years later, we were doing it again. now they are guilty of far worse crimes, which, through the constant repetition of the list over the past three weeks, have become a mantra of world evil.

So let's get through the 1998 list. President Saddam Hussein, according to Messrs Bill Clinton and Tony Blair: One: Refuses to abide by count-

less United Nations Security Council resolutions: Two: Continues to build weapons of mass destruction: Three: Blocks the work of Un-

scom arms inspectors; Four: Abuses human rights: Five: Has used poison gas "on his own people'

Six: Threatens his neighbours. We all know President Saddam is awful. Not as bad as Hitler or Stalin, but probably worse than Laurent Kabila, certainly worse than Muammar

But who else in 1998 qualifies for the first crime? Israel and Serbia. Who qualifies for the second crime? Iran, Israel. Svria, Pakistan, India, Crime number three is exclusive because there's no Unscom to inspect the other countries' weapons of mass destruction. But qualifying for crime number four? Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Israel. Libya, Palestine, Syria, Saudi Arabia. Turkey ... you name it. Crime number five? Only Iraq - with a caveat: why does no Western leader mention that he killed far more tell us. But it's not. Iraq cannot Iranians with gas than he did

Iraqi Kurds? Because the Kurds were supporting Iran at the time? Or because the Foreign Office and the US State Department supported Iraq when it was gassing Iranians? Guilty of number six? Iran, Is-

rael, Palestine, Syria, Turkey.

So what were we doing bombing Iraq? Or, more to the point, why weren't we bombing all the other Middle Eastern sinners? Back in February, we clearly wanted to homb Iraq when President Saddam prevented UN arms inspectors from entering his palaces. The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, produced a "memorandum of understanding" to let 60,000 dead children who have the UN make a one-time inspection, in the company of foreign diplomats. Then President Saddam reneged again, sending the inspectors home. To the fury of the American military, Bill Clinton called off the

bombers at the last moment. Then President Saddam blocked the inspectors once more, and it was "chocks away". Or so we are led to believe.

Certainly, President Saddam had decided to rid himself of the inspectors. Indeed, he almost certainly wished to be bombed - he had given up any hope of having sanctions lifted. He knew he would survive and that the Arab world would sympathise with the Iraqis who suffered and that the UN Security Council would be split between the US-British alliance

and the rest. His list of crimes may seem obvious in the West. In the Middle East, the list of those who also commit his crimes is rather better known. And so is the result of eight years of UN sanctions: the 5,000 babies dying every month, the children dying of cancer in the irradiated battlefields of southern Iraq, the villagers drinking water from rivers and taps contaminated with sewage, the girls prostituting themselves.

All President Saddam's fault, Messrs Clinton, Blair and Cook feed itself under the oil-for

food programme, as the UN's bureaucrats have now admitunaffected by sanctions, yet we continue to impose them.

Journalists are afraid of the figure of a million Iraqis dead through sanctions. But if the death toll for children is correct - and the statistic comes from the World Health Organisation - then we're talking about more than 480,000 dead children alone. When do we start talking about genocide?

So this Christmas, we debate the rights and wrongs of killing 62 Iraqi soldiers and 82 civilians in bombing raids and ignore expired via sanctions since January. Arabs, of course, do not. However deplorable their regimes, there is an overwhelming sense of fury and humiliation in the Arab world. which the Ramadan bombings have brought to boiling point. The conviction that it was all done to help President Clinton to avoid impeachment seems to put it beyond the immoral.

And of course, we've forgotten one of the most intriguing

- and dangerous - revelations of the year. UN senior inspected. President Saddam is tor Scott Ritter's admission that for years he was liaising with the Israeli intelligence service, something the Iraqis had claimed all along (to the contemptuous dismissal of the Americans and British).

Our masters didn't mention that when they launched their cruise missiles, did they? How much of Unscom's work was being handed on to the Israelis? Just Mr Ritter's investigations? He said the Israelis pinpointed targets for inspection to him. indirectly, that they also helped to target the missiles?

Washington politics are so cynical that there is not much point in debating the timing of the air strikes and Mr Clinton's impeachment. But what about Mr Blair, shrilly insisting that everything is above board.

French television got it about right when its Guignol series - the equivalent of Spitting Image - concluded after the bombings that the Prime Minister was the President's new White House intern.



A man searching the rubble of his Baghdad house, hit by a missile during this month's air raids Patrick Baz; AFP

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police bigotry THE LAWRENCE CASE BY KATHY MARKS

A searchlight

shining into

THERE WAS a scene in the Stephen, a talented 18-yearby weeks of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry that could have come straight from a Joe

Orton farce. In the witness box was Inspector Ian Little, the police officer entrusted with the delicate task of liaising with Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen Lawrence, on the night of the murder in Eltham, southeast London. Insp Little was asked what words of comfort he

had offered the Lawrences as

they waited outside the resuscitation room at the hospital. What he told them, he said, What he told them, he said, as this. "We've got a young lad in there, he's dead, we don't know who he is and we'd like to clarify that point. If it's not vour son, all well and good, but we need to know and I'm sure you'd like to know as well."

Such moments, and there were many of them, highlighted the extent to which the Metropolitan Police failed the Lawrences in their direst hour. But when the public inquiry delivers its verdict early next year on a police force regarded as one of the world's finest, gross insensitivity is sure to be he least serious of its findings. The eight-month inquiry exposed police incompetence on a grand scale. But as the weeks went by, the inquiry, chaired by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, grew into something far larger than was envisaged by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, who set its original remit.

The case was not just about a murder investigation. It was about the fragility of race relations at the end of the 20th century, about the bigotry and prejudice that still pollute public life.

The inquiry opened almost five years to the day after in multi-cultural Britain.

old, was accosted and stabbed while waiting for a bus home.

The intervening period had brought fresh torment for his parents. First the Crown Prosecution Service dropped its case against the prime suspects: Neil Acourt, his brother Jamie, David Norris, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson. Then an attempt by the Lawrences to bring a private prosecution collapsed. At the inquest, they watched in impotent fury as the five suspects mockingly in-

voked their right to silence. It was the cumulative effect of the testimony by the 65 police witnesses that was more shocking. It emerged that detectives received dozens of tipoffs in the first 48 hours naming the killers, but delayed making arrests for a fortnight. The senior detective in charge was not aware of the legal grounds on which arrests could be made.

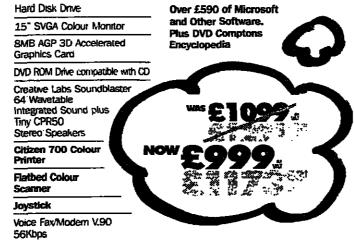
The inquiry was told that key witnesses were not followed up for weeks, and only cursory searches were made of the suspects' homes. The question was: had police been staggeringly incompetent, or had corruption and racism played a

The corruption theory was that David Norris's father, Clifford, a gangster and known associate of one Met officer, had paid off the detectives. The evidence was inconclusive. The allegations of racism, though,

were far more compelling. Some observers believe the way in which ethnic minority communities are policed is a litmus test of justice. If that is so. the Lawrence case has highlighted the chasm between high ideals and the harsh reality of life

SOUNDBITE OF 1998

'No government in history has been as obsessed with public relations as this one. Speaking for myself, if there is a message, I want to be off it' emy Paxman, presenter of 'Newsnight'



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CLASSICAL MUSIC BY MICHAEL CHURCH

and so will L

which three were at Glynde-

bourne. You couldn't wish for a

more perfect Glyndebourne

opera than Strauss's Copriccio.

nor a more perfectly judged

production of it than John Cox's

1973 version, back in a stunning

revival with Dame Kiri Te

THE CURSE of the music scene young cellist Richard Jenkin- by their etiquette: the year's is its sheer predictability. I've son, whose recent recital of developed a phobia for over- Brahms, Kodaly and Piazzolla hyped stars, the lumbering orchestral merry-go-round, and ed him to be on a par with the all but the most inspired stabs ubiquitous Steven Isserlis. at the exhausted core reperchestral concerts, but none Evgeny Kissin and Mitsuko Uchida, but each served only to send me back to their superlative recordings.

What I do vividly remember - apart from moments of oldfashioned excellence - is danger. daring and surprise. A big hand, then, for the Romanian buskers whose clarinet-andaccordion rendering of Viennese classics kept a Tube-full of passengers entranced between Leicester Square and King's Cross. Let this anonymous pair stand for the unappreciated army who routinely palliate

An accelade, too, for the

at Southwark Cathedral show-

Jenkinson is earning his toire. I've heard some fine or- bread as principal cellist in the City of Birmingham Symphony sticks in the mind; I've been to Orchestra but stands at the recitals by Alfred Brendel, head of another army of unsung heroes: professional musicians prepared to give top-notch concerts free. Among the more kosher

events, two left indelible memories. I never expect to hear a more wrenchingly vivid account of Bach's St John Passion than that by New College choir in their natural habitat under the baton of Edward Higginbottom and supported by a brilliant period ensemble. And the opening recital of Louis Lortie's Beethoven cycle - continuing next month at the Wigmore was so fresh as to have us on the edge of our seats.

But concerts are constricted

Nicholas Lehnhoff's revived production of Katya Kabanova most intense experiences all in-- starring Amanda Roocroft volved the fusion of music. drama and visual invention, was no less stunning, visually with the most magical being and vocally. And in a film-noir staging of Handel's Rodelindo (back in Shockheaded Peter. Based on cautionary tales for delinquent

German tots, this Grand Guigrepertory next year) we at last got to hear the fabled counternol extravaganza depended for tenor Andreas Scholl live on its frisson on the extraordistage, and breathtaking it was. nary presence of falsettist Martin Jacques. While the human Not merely through tonal purity marionettes on stage did unor technical perfection, but speakable things to each other, through sheer artistry - the way he shaped his phrases, and Jacques gave each grotesque scene a diabolical musical spin. the noble musicality of his pres-They'll be back at the Lyric ence. And this year I saw things Hammersmith in February, done to Monteverdi which should have been disastrous but actually were miracles. This year saw five sensational opera productions, of

Minimalist choreographer Trisha Brown turned Orfeo into an all-dancing dream at the Barbican, while Welsh National Opera extracted raunchy comedy - plus sublime beauty from the Tarantino horrors of L'Incoronazione di Poppea. If you don't believe me, watch it on BBC2 on 29 December.



Opera noir: a breathtaking 'Rodelinda' at Glyndebourne

The year of the big squelch

POP BY ANDY GILL

MOMENTS OF the year? There shift back towards American inwere, to be brutally honest, few notable moments at all in a British pop year dredging the depths of a post-Britpop slump, seemingly bereft of creative momentum at all save for one or two embers of inspiration.

On the performing front, the highlight was probably Corporal Robbie Williams' rallying of the troops in that First World War theme-park known as the Glastonbury Festival of Love, Peace and Mud.

As usual, the best British records came from the crowded intersection of rock and dance, with Fatboy Slim leading the assault with his remixes of Cornershop's "Brimful Of Asha" and Wildchild's "Renegade Master", followed by the knockout punch of "The Rockifella Skank", surely the single of the year.

In another damning indictment of British pop's backward nature, there was more decent French pop than British in 1998, thanks to the likes of Stardust, Bob Sinclar, Lo'Jo and Air. One glimmer of hope was provided by Gomez's winimaginative, eclectic approach

fluences after years of Britpop navel-gazing This shift was entirely

appropriate, given that 1998 was the year American pop finally dragged itself out of its own protracted slump, by rediscovering the power of its old roots music. American artists from Beck to the Beastie Boys, Lambchop to Sparklehorse, all issued records imbued with a restless pioneer spirit, while Mercury Rev produced the album of the year in Deserter's Songs, a haunting. uplifting work that contained a good half-dozen or so of the

year's great pop moments. Apart from that, 1998 was § notable mainly for the scumline of flakiness and criminality settling around much of the was arrested in Beverly Hills. while back home Ian Brown and Mark Morrison - surely the stupidest men in pop - both found themselves languishing at Her Majesty's pleasure for ego-related obnoxiousness.

Still, at least they managed to get themselves arrested. ning of the Mercury Music something few other British Prize, a reflection of the band's acts managed in the sorriest year for pop since Waterman and a promising indication of a first met Stock and Aitken.

Swinging way out to infinity

JAZZ BY PHIL JOHNSON (

AS MISSION statements, manifestos or corporate credos go, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing", might lack a little in gravitas, but nine times out of ten it still does the business where jazz is concerned.

At the Brecon Jazz Festival in August, the diminutive French pianist Michel Petrucciani the has a rare bone disease that has restricted his growth), swung so ceaselessly, so heroically and so mercilessly, that by the end of the performance no one could quite believe what they had seen or heard It was less like a concert

than a seance or a laying-on of hands, and Petrucciani truly did seem to bring the dead back to life. You could almost see Earl Hines, Art Tatum, Phineas Newborn and all the other great jazz piano magicians of the past, standing at the bar looking on and sipping their pints, saying, "Go on my son!" Even the fixtures and fittings in the Market Hall appeared to be expanding and contracting in time to the indeterminate rhythmic bounce of that mercurial swing-thing.

Perhaps this was hallucination, but then much of the con-

cert sounds distinctly unlikely. Did Petrucciani really hammer away at just one note of the keyboard for a full 10 minutes, as his finger became a cartoon blur of motion-lines, like Woody Woodpecker's beak? Did he then repeat a single bluesy phrase for another 10 minutes, using not one finger but two? And if so,

why did we like it so much? It was once said of a boogiewoogie pianist that he had a left hand like God; Petrucciani has two of them, and maybe another up his sleeve.

After the encores, Petruc-C. ciani came to the front to hold hands with his bassist Anthony Jackson and his drummer Steve Gadd, his tiny figure reaching somewhere beneath

their knees and their thighs. We did not so much as applaud as bend low and bow in obeisance, for the performance was like a glimpse into the infinite. Grown men cried, and you walked out into the hot evening sunshine and the beersmelling streets with a vision of glory buzzing in your head, and that single Woody Woodpecker note ringing in your ears. Honestly, it was that good.

SOUNDBITE OF 1998

"We mustn't downgrade the Opera House. I don't want to sit next to somebody in a singlet, a pair of shorts and a smelly pair of trainers' Sir Colin Southgate, Chairman of the Royal Opera

a Pay as you talk
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The world turned the right way up

VISUAL ARTS BY TOM LUBBOCK

IN THE visual arts, it is whole shows that usually get reviewed. But when it comes to reviewing the year, things can be different. The shows have closed and faded. It's single works that glow in the memory. Here are a dozen from 1998. in no particular order. They were all shown in the UK.

The first was a show in itself The Palace of Projects by Ilya & Emilia Kabakov, erected in London and Manchester, was a make-shift labyrinth, tilled with masses of earnest, ingenious schemes for the world - a method of punishing household objects, a plan to raise all the dead. The Palace was a great joke and more: a work in praise of human wishes, a monument to optimism.

The last paintings of Pierre Bonnard went beyond beauty to new intensities. Nude in the Bath and Small Dog (1943) in the Tate retrospective, show his now dead wife, Marthe, still bathing as ever. Her imagined body floats corpse-like, dissolving into its liquid cocoon youd. The device goes deep-into and the painting's sour metallic hues. The whole picture feels drowned. The only clear image is the basset, heraldic on the bath-mat. Everything may be lost - the dog at least is faithful to the memory.

Caius Cibber's stone sculptures of Melancholy and Raving Madness (1676) once stood before Bedlam. They were

These powerful, tormented figures are astonishing, not just for fusing nobility and wretchedness, but as reminders of what public art could once be: an open recognition of life's terrors.

Gloss over the subject of Renato Bertelli's Continuous Profile of Mussolini (1933). This object, in "Speed" at the Whitechapel, performs a spectacular paradox. It looks like a big chess-piece. Then you see that its turning edge, all round, is Il Duce's silhouette. Suddenly it's a spinning blur. Or rather, what's odder, there's no deception. It's clearly solid and static. It's a sculpture of a blur.

The glimpse through a doorshown at Dulwich Picture Gallery. A Mother and Child with its Head in her Lap (1658) is its loveliest example. The front room is shady: a flash of light hits the open door; a square of light spreads on the floor beearly feelings about the big world opening out beyond you. At the same time it's only household magic. The promised land is the room next door.

Susan Hiller's Wild Talents was a haunting video piece, installed in darkness at the top of Berry House in Clerkenwell, It played a dreamy sequence of movies such as Pollergeist, All questions of reality were suspended. The special effects became pure wonders.

Though she just missed the Turner Prize, Tacita Dean's chalk-on-blackboard drawings, The Roaring Forties: Seven Boards in Seven Days, stole the show (Tate). These pictures of sea and ships have a remarkable presence. Their secret is using chalk and blackboard as a tonal medium, as light and dark. The images are phantoms, flashing out of darkness, on the verge of erasure.

Bridget Riley's four screen prints, Nineteen Greys (1968) were the real eye-catchers in her show at Abott Hall, Kendal. way to a sun-lit room was the They're simply grey spots on most piercing trick in Pieter de grey, but masterfully judged to Hooch's domestic interiors, create multiple surface illusions -of shadow-fall and smoky film, shiny mirroring and deep-cut holes. The effects are lucid but elusive. You can analyse, but you can't blink out of them,

Seen at Art TM in Inverness, David Connearn's ink drawings are philosophical investigations, studies in intention. One free-hand straight line is drawn under another, over and over. Each line tries to hug the wandering path of the last, but wanders itself. So a Chinese whisper picture accumulates, whose beautiful patterns are quite unintended, generated only by the hand's error.





"The Roaring Forties: Seven Boards in Seven Days' (top) and 'Disappearance at Sea by Tacita Dean, who just missed the Turner Prize but stole the show at the Tate

table-tennis tables, but remade and (rare today) an artwork that affirms everyday life. Marc Quinn's Study for Approaching

Gallery: a lead cast of the upside down. And with that in-- green for green - into the artist's skin, compacted like shape and plan of London's dropped trousers. You made out turned upside down, This block central parks: an indoor public a face and foot in the squash - at our feet is the planet's sculpture, a knockabout map, a folded bog-person, the body pedestal. We stand towards the reduced to a tablet of itself.

My full stop is Piero Manfilm-clips showing paranormal Marion Coutts' London Planck Density 66 Kg was a seen at the Serpentine. It's an dome, opening a year from happenings, sampled from Leisure was shown and played small mound of metal on the iron cuboid, on which the title, now, can only dream of doing.

at Riba. It was a set of playable floor of the South London "world-plinth". is embossed version, the world itself is whole earth as its spectators and makers. In a few square zoni's Socle du Monde (1961), feet it does what a certain

مكذا من الأجل

Matters of stupendous moment

THEATRE BY PAUL TAYLOR

WHEN PETER BROOK made his classic statement that "theatre reopens what definition closes". he probably wasn't envisaging the spectacle of two men in suits pretending to be idiotic thespians pretending to be the Prince and Princess of Wales and everyone else associated with their ill-starred marriage.

Yet in its own sublimely silly. rulebook-tearing fashion, the National Theatre performance of Brent's Love Upon the Throne is a rapturous illustration of what he means. For as well as being the funniest show of the year, this piece has a curiously touching self-reflexive quality. Hapless inadequates thrust into roles they can't manage play, well, hapless inadequates thrust into roles they can't manage.

So it has a revelatory aspect. too; by highlighting the kinship between the predicaments of an actor and the predicament of a royal, Love Upon the Throne exposes the inherent sympathy in theatrical presentations of monarchy, even those designed to he satiric.

Meanwhile, a real eyeopener, or rather ear-opener for me was the intensity of the silence at both performances I attended of the National Theatre's production of Copenhagen, my play of the year.

Michael Frayn's profound and haunting meditation on science and morality and the ineffable mysteries of human motivation explores difficult material with a searchingness that simply would not be risked in a television play or film.

trio of people re-enacts the enigmatic visit made in 1941 by the German physicist. Werner Heisenberg, to his Danish counterpart and erstwhile mentor, Niels Bohr. This puzzle opens up matters of stupendous moment.

Some complained that it was a treatise rather than a play. But the essence of drama is rhythm and, as Michael Blakemore's production beautifully brought out, Copenhagen is built on the recurring rhythms of re-enactment. A dazzling achievement

The past year has also stretched credulity; on the theatrical front, in several pleasing

A Racine season in the West End? This seemed about as feasible as a Ray Cooney retrospective at the Bouffes du Nord. before the Almeida's Jonathan Kent triumphantly brought it off with Diana Rigg and Toby Stephens. Then again, a sologig from David Hare? Surely they meant to book Jackie Mason?

But Via Dolorosa, his reflections on a first visit to the Middle East was no mere what-I-did-in-the-holidays lecture with slides, nor a lazy substitute for a play.

A gripping dramatic monologue about the ambiguous benefits and penalties of faith, communicated with wit. fire and growing confidence. it managed like many of the best things this year - Sarah Kane's Crave, Mark Ravenhill's Handbog and the brilliantly baleful junk-opera Snockheaded Peter - to disturb your assumptions about what form a theatrical

Great bits, but no pieces

THERE WERE movies with great things in them this year. although not actually any great

The most startling images came in the opening 25-minute flurry of Savina Private Ruan. Steven Spielberg's account of the American D-Day landings at Omaha. No sooner does the straction brought on by terror, ramp on the foremost landing craft drop down than a chattering hail of machine-gun fire engulfs the oncoming marines.

Spielberg gets up close to the impact of gunfire as bullets whistle through flesh, khaki. steel helmets. There is nowhere to hide in this open-air

FILM BY ANTHONY QUINN

when it all seems to freeze, and Captain Miller (played superbly by Tom Hanks) enters a kind of around him: it's a state of ab- ra. Who could follow that? Western Front also recall after going over the top.

Miller, whose dream-time has lasted no more than four or five seconds, forces himself back into the horrific present. In these moments Spielberg gestures towards an unglamorous truth about men in com-

gun-toting heroics but in the sheer will to carry on.

It's no discredit to Spielberg battle fugue, the thunder of that the rest of his film failed to the guns slowing and muffling match the gut-churning bravu-

> ilar difficulty with his conspiracy thriller Snake Eyes. The 20 minute Steadicam take that opens the film is an audacious and exhilarating demonstration of film craft, conducting the audience via a crooked cop (Nicolas Cage) right into the heart of fight night in Atlantic

as he orbits the fight arena. pocketing bribes, beating up a miscreant and generally wallowing in the glow of his own

De Palma builds the seinto the frenzied expectation On a much smaller scale, around the baying auditorium Before Us, a huge hit during the which certain soldiers on the Brian de Palma ran into a sim- - it's like lions-and-Christians night in Ancient Rome. Then comes what is my

favourite movie moment this year as Cage gets to his feet with a triumphant yell of "I am the king!" On that instant the whole arena rises with him. Glorious fun. Snake Eyes thereafter turned into a nugatory join-the-dots thriller.

Cage holds the centre here SOMETHING OLD, something new, something borrowed - the

reliable old formula worked again. Yes, I did see something blue too, but that was not a high-

The best of the old was Birm-Second World War but not performed for 50 years because everyone was afraid it would not work without its original star, the late, great Robert Helpmann.

Well, there isn't really anyone to match his comic exuberance. but the jokes now are given more as an ensemble effort. and how good it was to see David Bintley's company celebrating

light of my year.

DANCE BY JOHN PERCIVAL

Old tricks and new pursuits

the centenary of their founder, it to Conlon Nancarrow's highsuch a lively, funny, unhackquence beautifully, wiring us ingham Royal Ballet's revival of proved that in the 18th century was so appealing I was drawn Ninette de Valois's The Prospect dancers got up to just as many to see it again and again. lively tricks as they do today.

My best new piece also had a female choreographer, Siobhan Davies, who never offers anything so old-fashioned as a story, but does make beautiful dances for her beautiful dancers. She called this work Eightu-eight because that's the year she started her company, and also because it is the number of keys on a piano. She set thanks to the Royal Ballet, but

Dame Ninette, by presenting ly individual music for player piano. Sometimes mysterious, neved piece, with a story which sometimes jazzy, the outcome

> The reopening of the new, vastly improved Sadler's Wells Theatre brought joy to the autumn with a series of dance companies: among them William Forsythe's amazing company from Frankfurt. His choreography, taking classical ballet further into the next century than anyone else has attempted, was already admired here.

for the greatest delight you need to see his regular dancers making its revolutionary innovations of shape, timing and texture look absolutely natural.

And while London borrowed from Germany, the Edinburgh Festival borrowed three dance companies from Holland to celebrate the highly original Dutch choreographer Hans van Manen. Best of all was the devastating originality of Live. This lets its female protagonist start on stage, accompanied by giant video projections of her face or hands before the cameraman pursues her into the street while the enthralled audience sits watching her image walk. So vulnerable, so brave; such magic.



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Hold on. Haven't we been here before?

SO MANY of the new things vu feeling. No self-respecting child could be seen in the playground without a yo-yo. But didn't we all dimly remember yoyos from our own childhoods, cheaper certainly and less newsworthy, but somewhere there in the recesses of memory?

déia vu that struck when we all gave an enormous welcome to free admission at museums. Terribly kind and progressive of the Labour government to promise us such a cultural boon; but did it not already

Even the humble egg was relaunched as television cook Delia Smith demonstrated how to boil one and boosted egg sales by 54 million.

And to prove, if proof were needed, that a disaster is never fully a disaster until it is at the local multiplex, a new generation discovered the Titanic. That was illustrated by a youth in a cinema queue in Leicester Square, central London, who heard the person behind him talking about the ship sinking on its maiden voyage, and

turned round furiously to exabout 1998 had a curiously deja claim: "Oh, thank you VERY

much." Some of the people we said "hello" to also seemed familiar. Take that modestly dressed, dignified, young humanitarian United Nations envoy, Geri Halliwell. Dab on much more make-up and hair colouring, It was just such a feeling of give it a pout, and you have almost got that feisty, micro-skirted, Union flag figure Ginger Spice.

And who was that John Glenn deciding to boldly go where few men had ever gone before? But one of the few was that same Glenn, back when yoyos were in their first flush.

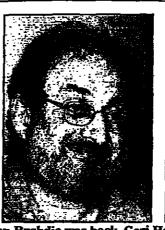
There was a welcome "hello" to Salman Rushdie, though those who frequented book prizes and other cultural dinners over the past few years may have felt that they had seen him around.

The sense that many of this year's "hellos" were a form of reinvention was encouraged by one of the technological discoveries of the year. Glasgow University came up with computer-assisted ways of bringing dead Hollywood stars

HELLOS AND GOODBYES BY DAVID LISTER









Salman Rushdie was back, Geri Halliwell swapped stages

back to life on the screen. If you thought Chris Evans getting into bed with John and Yoko was taking a stomach-curdling liberty with social history, wait and see what plans Quentin Tarantino could have for Marilyn Monroe.

Frank Sinatra (left) died, Delia Smith boiled eggs,

It was a year that saw rock music renew its acquaintance with bad behaviour. Unfortunate, that, as it was also the year that cabinet ministers thought Prime Minister John Prescott

tried to relive his youth at the Brit Awards and Danbert Nobacon of Chumbawamba threw a bucket of water over him for his pains. Prescott summoned record company chiefs to his office to complain about the insult to him and "the womenfolk" present, a quaint use of language that must have had Mr Nobacon reaching for his dictionary.

If "hellos" were definitely they would get trendy. Deputy more of a welcome back this year, then at least they came

with a twist in the tail. It was "hello again" to painting as a painter won the Turner Prize for the first time since 1985. But while Chris Ofili was a painter. he at least eschewed anything as reactionary and infra dig as oils or water colours. Why pay for those materials, when there are bucket-loads of elephant dung going begging?

Some "goodbyes" were involuntary, some unanticipated, some temporary. Peter Man-

delson and Ron Davies might yet be back; Geoffrey Robinson will probably have a lot of spare time to count his money. David Beckham said a temporary farewell to the England team and popularity for scraping mud on an Argentine leg; Paul Gascoigne would, perhaps, have liked to have thrown some mud after being forced to say "goodbye" to international football but threw a table lamp instead. Other "goodbyes" were, of

death to have achieved a level of popularity that might have surprised her, and to be an icon of vegetarian and pro-animal groups, which would have

delighted her. The media lost some of its best known names including Lord Rothermere and Sir David English, And in the ever-affable Lew Grade we surely saw one of the last of the media moguls, who was not only adventurous and shrewd but approachable and good fun.

The approach of a new century was marked by the passing of another larger than life figure, Francis Albert Sinatra. In what serves as an interesting lesson for up-andcoming celebrities, Frank's reluctance to give interviews and tread the chat show circuit means that one of the greatest entertainers of the century despite biographies and thousands of profiles - has died with us knowing virtually nothing of what he really thought and felt, and with the mystique still

That is more than can be

course, permanent Linda Mc-Cartney showed herself in Said for poor Yves Montand. The French film legend who said "goodbye" in 1991 had to say a posthumous "hello" when he was disinterred in March for DNA testing to establish a paternity claim.

The most welcome "goodbye" of the year, if we follow an invention from Sweden, will be a farewell to the stuff of nightmares, the dentist's drill. Swedish company MediTeam produced a gel that can dissolve rotten parts of a tooth in 30 seconds and leave healthy parts alone, rendering the drill, and the gleam in the dentist's eye, redundant. But the most interesting "hello", followed by the quickest "goodbye", was another scientific invention. Sony invented a video camera, the Handycam, which included an infra red detector for seeing at

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Unfortunately (or maybe not) when used in daylight it saw through people's clothes and made them appear naked. Sony quickly dumped the invention and offered refunds. Yet they failed to find a single person who

wanted their money back. Beats yo-yos any day.



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registering minute shifts of delight or dismay at every move President Bill Clinton makes. We get a Mori poll every few months telling us to what new levels of depression British businessmen have sunk. But the healthy know not of

their healthiness, only the sick, as St Matthew's gospel informs us: and thus I wish to propose a controversial thesis: that the inhabitants of the United Kingdom are getting happier in themselves and about themselves. Some countries seem able

more homogeneous. And the

more we share enthusiasms

and cultural epiphanies, the

more we shall feel part of the gang, the mass of British.

The most expressive moment

of the British zeitgeist was on 30

June this year when, 16 minutes

into the England vs Argentina

game, the teenage Michael

Owen raced like a whippet

through the Argentine defences

and whacked the most perfect

goal I have ever seen past Car-

los Roa, the Argentine keeper

Although I did not see it then -I was collecting my daughter

from a school concert. A private

school in Dulwich, south London,

is not the obvious place to hear

World Cup fever break out, but

Among the bourgeois-as-a-

Burberry parents seat-belting their Cordelias and Xerxeses

into their Galaxys and Espaces,

one of them had been listening

on the car radio: one penalty, an

equalising penalty, then the

Owen goal. It was too much.

Throwing dignity to the winds,

the woman screamed "Two-

one! Jesus! Michael Owen!" A

mighty ululation rose from

throats wholly unused to the ter-

race chant. It was electrifying.

gest and best focus of national

feeling in 1998, but far from the only one. And the moments that

best captured the zeitgeist were

moments in which classes and

races and styles of people got

mixed up. Remember the green-

welly demonstration on 1

March? The Countryside Al-

liance was more than a gang of

blood-sport lovers; it was the

massed ranks of rustic Middle

England discovering the plea-

sures of organised protest.

Chaps in soft hats asked each

other, "Your first demo too, old

boy?", shared hip flasks and

arranged to lunch at the

Athenaeum. They were the liv-

The World Cup was the big-

that is what happened.

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WALES & THE WEST

ing, walking, brogue-shod heart of Britain and they knew it.

In the most remarkable outbreak of peace in three decades. the Northern Irish peace agreement was drafted, agreed on and adhered to. The ensuing Omagh bomb - a vicious reprisal from an IRA splinter group - was condemned as much by the IRA as by the Government it really felt as though it might be the last one ever. The triumph of Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, allowed the Hiberno-English in Britain to live in peace with their identity: and showed the British that neither Irish republicans nor Ulstermen need be caught forever in the tentacles of history.

The royals went all democratic. Zara Phillips got a stud in her tongue, Prince William did a can shuffle for fans in Van anteed that most of its citizens couver. The Queen went into democratic overdrive, visiting a Hackney octogenarian's tiny flat. signing footballs and inviting "ordinary people" to her 50th ansigns that we are becoming niversary dinner at the palace.

Britons even started to feel proud of British designers, if only for the way they (Stella Mc-, Cartney, Alexander McQueers John Galliano) seemed to be the only people who knew How to Do Fashion in France, called in to

head up Paris couture houses. The modern British bar is where the Nineties generation is most spectacularly on display: moneyed early-twentysomethings, drinking expensive bottled beer talking projects and money, aspiring to a dream of hyper-efficient, hi-tech, Boatengsuited omnicompetence.

For whatever reasons, several British things that used to be considered embarrassing or account rebarbative were reprieved. The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, was a figure of fun to the press when he left his wife and married his secretary, Gaynor Regan. who has the name of one of King Lear's nasty daughters and the face of an El Greco martyr. Months later, we have mostly forgotten her existence but admired Mr Cook's speeches during the Saddam war (mk II).

British beef was judged to be OK again by the Continentals. The Millennium Dome began to look a thing of beauty.

You could look for reasons for this new national pride in the strong pound or in fin de siècle Little Englandism. It might have more to do with the Labour government which, a Mori poll shows, is as popular as it was at the start of the year, is perceived as proactive, agenda-setting and full of social radicalism.

And soon bars will open until 3am and the British will have even more time to remark on their own wonderfulness, their style and flair, their genius at architecture and the matchless wonder of their biographers. As long as nobody disagrees, we will all get on famously.

SOUNDBITE OF 1998

'We are what we are. We are all different, the products of both our genes and our experiences' Ron Davies, former secretary of state for Wales

Je 11 11 150

SHARPS Bedrooms

Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098 E-mail: IndyBusiness@Independent.co.uk

BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Sanofi talks to potential bidders

SANOFI, France's second-largest drugs maker, said on Thursday that it was in talks with potential bidders for its cosmetics and fashion units after LVMH, the luxury goods maker, pulled out of the bidding.

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch consumer products giant, has said it is interested in the business, which include the Yves Saint Laurent fashion house and is valued at around \$1bn (£600m). Sanofi wants to sell its beauty division, which last year had sales of \$710m, to focus on pharmaceuticals after its recent takeover of smaller rival Synthelabo.

Jersey European revives flotation



JERSEY EUROPEAN Airways, the Exeter-based airline owned by Jack Walker (pictured), the former steel baron and current owner of Blackburn Rovers, is back on track for a £100m-plus listing on the stock market next year, after posting profits of £6.1m in the six months to 30 September. Profits were 35 per cent up on the same stage last year and well

ahead of the £5.5m total for the whole of 1996/97. Plans to float the airline, which operates flights to Northern Ireland and France as well as the Channel Islands, were postponed earlier this year after the stock market peaked in July.

LTCM rescuers could share \$50m

THE PARTNERSHIP that controls Long-Term Capital Management, the hedge fund that had to be saved from collapse in September, could collect end-of-year performance fees of \$50m (£30m).

Under the terms of the \$3.6bn bailout, the controlling partners are entitled to collect 15 per cent of all profits made by the fund after the rescue package was agreed. According to reports, this share could be as much as \$50m.

Funds team up to bid for NIB

ABP, Europe's largest pension fund, on Thursday teamed up with Dutch fund PGGM to launch a 2bn guilder (£660m) takeover bid for NIB, a niche investment bank part-owned by the Dutch government.

The two funds already own 4 per cent of NIB and said they want to buy the state's 35 per cent stake. A spokesman for the finance ministry said the authorities were willing to sell their holdings. NIB has around 25bn guilders of funds under management.

STOCK MARKETS

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FTSE 250	4812.80	14.80	0.31	5970.90	4247.60	
FTSE 350	2762.50	-15.30	-0.55	2969.10	2210,40	
FTSE All Share	2663.74	-13.49	-0.50	2886.52	2143.53	3.49
FTSE SmallCap	2052 40	8.00	0.39	2793.80	1834.40	4.09
FTSE Fledgling	1135.80	2_90	0.26	1517.10	1046.20	0.00
FTSE AIM	792.10	-0.10	-0.01	1146.90	761.30	0.00
FTSE EBLOC 100	986.90	0.79	0.08			
Dow Jones	9217.99	15.96	0.17	9380.20	7400.30	1.62
Vikkei	13706.73	-72.72	-0.53	17352.95	12787.90	1.07
lang Seng	10292.20	133.45	T.31	11926.16	6544.79	3.03
Dax	4951.77	126.39	2.62	6217.83	3833.71	1.73

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index	3 monti	Yr chg	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	6.35	-1.34	5.68	-2.00	4.44	-1.76	4.32	-1.85
US	5.28	-0.62	5.16	-0.81	4.77		5.22	
Japan	0.53	-0.23	0.57	-0.15	2.07	0.16	2.74	0.20
Germany	3.31	-0.39	3.18	-0.78	3.91	-1,32	4.81	-1.02

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	POI	JND			DOLLAR				
	at 9pm	Change	Yr Ago		at 9pm	Grante	Yr Ago		
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D-Mark	2.8145	+0.64pf	2.9743	D-Mark	1.6830	+0.98pf	1.7987		
Yen	194.46	+40.13		Yen	116.29	+¥0.45	130.58		
£ index	101.00	0.00	104,80	\$ Index	105.10	+0.00	108.40		

OTHER INDICATORS

•	Close	: CHE	II Mgv			40	
Brent Oil (\$) 9.96	-0.06	16_99	GDP 115.40	3.00	112.04	Dec
Gold (\$)	286.15			RPI 154.40	3.00	159.61	Dec
Silver (S)	4.91	0.02	6.03	Base Rates	6.25	7.25	
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Gold (\$)	286.15	-0.B0	296.45	RPI	154.40	3.00	159.5	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Silver (S)	4.91	0.02	6.03	Base	Rates	6.25	7.25	_	
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Source: Thomas Cook

FTSE dives into red in thin trading

THE UK stock market slumped into the red on Thursday, with several traders remaining on the sidelines in the last day before the Christmas break.

The benchmark FTSE 100 index fell in the shortened session with trading so thin that turnover struggled to top 100 million shares.

Despite New York's overnight surge Footsie ended 41.6 points down at 5,867.2. However, supporting shares moved ahead with the mid cap index up 14.8 points at 4,812.8 and the small cap up 8 points to 2.052.4. "Opening has been a waste

of time; we've been twiddling our thumbs," one stockbroker complained. British Petroleum, ahead of its merger with Amoco, was the most heavily traded share,

achieving a volume of just 4.21 million shares. The price strengthened 14.5p to 916.5p, the result of some gentle shopping by tracker funds building a position

ahead of the Amoco deal. Diageo toasted the festivities with the best Footsie gain as fears LVMH would sell some of its 10.84 per cent stake finally evaporated as the French group gave up its pursuit of the Sanofi beauty business.

Stagecoach hardened 4.5p to 254.5p and business support group Hays, helped by investment meetings, rose 6p to 483p. Weak sales figures from the

John Lewis Partnership for last week unsettled retailers with Marks & Spencer, off 9.75p to 408p, and Asda, 3.25p to 159.5p. Next retreated 5p to 480p and Boots 14.5p to 1,040p.

By Derek Pain

Laura Ashley, off 0.5p to 15p, and Bentalis, the department store group, 4p at 73.5p.

But Uno, the furniture chain that has been under relentless pressure in the festive run-up, improved 6p to 37p. The shares were 337.5p last year.

Mortgage banks, on continuing talk of growing competition, had a poor session with Halifax off 28p to 850p and Woolwich 5.75p to 354p.

Mining stocks were also friendless. Biliton lost 4p to 120p and RioTinto, 20.5p to Colt Telecom, the fledgling

telephony group, set to be the top performing share of the year, experienced a rare misdial, giving up 22.5p to 925p.

Despite confident talk of record Christmas sales mobile phone shares fell back. Securicor retreated 8.5p to 499.5p and Vodafone 23p to 970p as the inevitable profit takers grabbed their Christmas box. Others lowered included BT, down, 4p at 902.5p, and Orange, 6p at 691p. National Power slipped 2p

to 516.5p after failing to clinch a 20 per cent stake in Poland's second largest generator. Computer shares had an-

other good session with Misys putting on 23.75p to 447.5p, encouraged by the overnight high-tech performance in New Goldsmiths, the jewellers

where takeover action could break out, gained a further 5p to 169p but Moss Bros, the menswear retailer, fell 6p to Other retailers to feel a 144n as the rumoured hid failed Christmas Eve chill were to materialise.

Eyecare Products blinked 2.5p higher to 14.5p following an agreed 15p a share offer from a company linked to its mangement. Talks with two other

possible bidders have been terminated Servisair rose 19p to 174p as possible bidders circled the aircraft support group. Vardon, the leisure operation selling its 23 Sea Life Centres and

with the £47m realised. Car dealers again respondactivity that has embraced Dagenham Motors and Evans

European Motors moved ahead 6p to 62p and Sytner 6p to 156.5p. Inchcape, however,

Silver Shield, the windscreen replacement company that controls third division Swansea FC, held at 1.75p after obtaining planning permission for a £75m redevelopment of the Swansea stadium.

suspension, while the yearly repleted, at an unchanged 4p.

they soared to 109p before falling sharply as the company ran into problems.

ment group, rose a further 27.5p to 310p. The shares have climbed

two dungeon attractions, fell 9p to 137.5p at disappointment

ed to the outbreak of takeover Halshaw.

reversed 5.5p to 122p.

Reflec, the troubled reflective ink maker, returned to market after a near four month

port and accounts were com-The shares first arrived nearly three years ago at 40p;

MSB International, the information technology recruit-

170p since an upbeat trading statement appeared last week. Still they remain well below the 1,047p peak hit in the spring.



On Christmas morning, jobseekers visit a work placement office in Tokyo

Jobless rate in Japan soars to 46-year high

JAPAN'S STRICKEN economy was dealt another blow yesterday with news that the unemployment rate had soared to the highest level in almost half a

The country's financial plight was compounded by the revelation that its 17 biggest banks were sitting on a \$426bn pile of bad loans – a much higher fig-

ure than expected. The Japanese government announced that the country's iobless rate hit 4.4 per cent in November its highest since 1953, as the stagnating economy continued to take its toll on the

Pay Nothing until the Year 2000

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By Lea Paterson and FRANCESCO GUERRERA

said it was the first time ever that Japanese unemployment has equalled the US figure. Experts said the record had

little economic significance but was a humiliating defeat for a country once famous for its "jobs-for-life" culture. "I think a meltdown in the lifetime employment system is going to start," said Economic Planning Agency minister Taichi Sakaiya.

The economic gloom had little impact on the Nikkei index, which ended a three-day losing labour market. The authorities streak on Christmas day. The

index closed up 91.22 points to 13,797.95 after Kiichi Miyazawa, the finance minister, said the government would not sell its holding of government bonds. The news prompted a fall in bond yields and sparked a raily among financial stocks.

Worries about the health of Japanese banks had led to a 0.53 per cent tumble in the Nikkei on Christmas Eve. Standard & Poor's decision to downgrade seven Japanese banks also hit bank shares, which fell 2 per cent. Most other stock markets were closed for Christmas Day, On Christmas Eve, the Dow Jones had closed up 15.96 at 9.217.99.

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Merger threat to steel jobs

HUNDREDS OF steel jobs are BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA set to be axed following Thursday's £40m takeover of Co-Steel Sheerness, the steel maker, by rival ASW.

Sources said that there could be up to 250 layoffs among the 3,200-strong combined workforce as ASW, in Cardiff, and Co-Steel, in Kent, strive to slash costs and reduce capacity. The enlarged group may close one of four furnaces and one of five steel mills.

The companies said the Christmas Eve deal would "inevitably lead to job losses" but gave no numbers. Michael Leahy, general secretary-elect of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, demanded an "urgent meeting to see how we can best protect our members interests while ensuring plants remain viable".

ASW said buying Co-Steel from Canadian parent Co-Steel Inc would "address the fundamental industry problem of overcapacity" and yield substantial cost savings. The group will be the leading steel supplier to UK construction, with over half the market, and a mediumsized player in Europe. Insiders said the combined

company, which will have annual turnover of about £500m, could save £20m a year by in-

and administrative functions. George Duncan, the ASW

chairman who is to keep the post in the new group, said:
"The intention is that in a very tough market we will be in a stronger position to compete."

The deal was part-financed by venture capitalist Candover, which is set to inject up £43m in the new company, and will become one of the largest shareholders with up to 54 per cent of the group. The bulk of the holding will be in convertible loan notes - that can be exchanged for shares at a later date. Candover said it would not keep its stake in ASW and was planning to distribute it to several institutions on conversion of the notes.

Candover was understood to have picked the group's new chief executive, Graham Mackenzie, the director-general of the Engineering Employers' Federation. Mr Mackenzie, who will leave the trade body as soon as a replacement is found, is a former chief executive of United Engineering Steels. He will replace Alain Soulas, ASW's current chief executive.

Co-Steel Inc will also be a major shareholder in the new

package includes this high performance 366MHz PC system

tegrating production plants group with up to 38 per cent.

64v 3D PCI Wavetable sound • 32 speed CD-ROM drive (DVD drive on DVD models) • 15" digital colour screen • 513K cache • Pus 55K PCI

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IN BRIEF Goldsmiths rises on bid talks

SHARES IN Goldsmiths group rose 8p to 170p on Thursday on the back of continued hopes of a bid for the jeweller. The stock rose over 50 per cent above the market price of 112p on Wednesday before the company confirmed "tentative talks" that could lead to a bid.

Eyecare accepts £13.3m offer EYECARE PRODUCTS, the spectacle and sunglasses

maker, has accepted an offer of 15p a share in cash from Kappa, a French company part-owned by one of Eyecare's directors. The bid values the company at £13.29m.

Alstom wins French rail orders

ALSTOM, the Angio-French engineering group, has won orders worth 1.9bn francs (£211m) from the French railway operator SNCF to provide wagons and locomotives.

0.6071

Mataysia (ringgits)

Day I discovered De Coubertin was wrong

EVEN BEFORE I lined up, I realised I had made a bad mistake. The Watford and District schools athletics meeting had attracted a large number of attractive girls to the Woodside Stadium, and as they chattered in the main stand or glanced towards the track on which I stood, I thought to myself how interesting girls from schools other than your own always were.

Some of them looked just like girls in your own school, but you knew that if you went up and talked to them, these creatures in different coloured uniform, or at least got talking to someone who knew them, and got to speak to them that way, they would be different and more interesting. At least, you thought you knew. And it was always interesting to find out.



ROWBOTTOM

But there was no chance of finding anything out about the assembled females at this time. And there would not be a chance, because I knew with a sick feeling that by the had ever contested I was going to

slink away as a loser From where I stood, or rather loitered, there were three insupera-

ble problems. And they were all my Two of them were wearing the full running kit and spikes. Spikes! For God's sake...

One of the well-kitted out pair. I gathered, was a county champion. Both were already running up and down the track in little bursts, apparently unworried about the possibility of getting puffed out before

do me much good, I decided there was no way I was wasting my energy like that. Besides, I hadn't got house by our mutual friend Pete,

want to raise any false expectations.

The competitor who completed the line-up - four runners! Where were the duffers when I needed them? - was my friend, Kidder. He wasn't really called Kidder, but he called me Kidder and I called him Kidder It was The Return of the

Likely Lads that made us do it. Kidder was one of those people who applied himself to goals and achieved them. That's him Kidder, not me Kidder. He approached running with the same determination as he did Latin verbs or chemical equations. And I knew that in prepa-Even though I knew it would not ration for this race, for the previous month at least, he had been paced

So Kidder was definitely going to

the fancy kit were going to beat him. of course, around this strange, bouncy track. For 3,000 metres.

As the race took shape - over the first 100 metres or so - I decided the only thing to do was to adopt the stoic attitude. This was something I had got into without thinking - "What about you, Rowbottom? You like athletics, don't you?" "Yes sir" "Right then. We'll put you down as well."and now I had to accept my lot.

After a couple of laps I began to pick up some sympathetic applause when it became clear that my lag-ging 50 or so metres behind the

By the halfway mark I had come to to pronounce the letter R - would value my adidas Rom trainers, bebeat me. And the two characters in cause, I believed, they announced to the watching nubiles: "I am not There was nowhere to run-except, a serious runner. I am just here for a laugh." The difficulty here was that, as Kidder disappeared, I

wasn't laughing. I had never know-

ingly run 3,000 metres before, and

the experience was not pleasant.

The key, I decided, was to focus on the words of my old games master, Mr Chester-Hall. With his crinkly ginger bair, bowed legs and gaunt cheeks, Chiggy Hall - as we wittily called him - would accompany us on Wednesday morning runs through the suburban highways and byeways of Croxley

end of the first proper track race I the nerve to do it anyway. I didn't who was equipped with a bike and leading pair was not a tactical ploy. - who was, as it happened, unable seek to modify our behaviour with a standard message.

"Wernember," he would say, "this is a cwoss-countwy...wun, and NOT a cwoss-countwy...wace." I think what Chiggy Hall was trying to say was that the important thing was to enjoy the experience of running, of exercising, rather than trying to beat your neighbour. It was a homespun version of de Coubertin's timeless advice - that it is the taking part, and not the winning, that counts.

And, do you know, he was absolutely wrong. I crossed the line at Woodside Stadium a distant last – exhausted, humiliated. I went home and decided to concentrate on foot-

Tennis: Britain's talented twosome are showing a hunger for success that puts their peers in other sports to shame

No 1 target for Henman and Rusedski

THERE WAS a moment during the BY JOHN ROBERTS festive season when Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski wished each other well without the prompting of

cameras or microphones. The tennis writers' annual awards dinner and dance at the All year.' England Club was nearing its conclusion when Rusedski and his girlfriend, Lucy Connor, made their way to the crowded dance floor and exchanged pleasantries with Hen-

man and his girlfriend, Lucy Heald. Any officials of the Lawn Tennis Association privy to the interlude would probably have chimed in with, "And a happy and prosperous

Henman and Rusedski, the British No 1 and No 2 respectively. both end 1998 ranked in the ATP Tour's world top 10, a first for which the LTA must be truly thankful. But with nothing to boast about beyond Henman and Rusedski, the weight of expectation on the pair increases. It has not become a burden only because the players wish for themselves what others wish for them.

"I'm very excited about next vear." Henman, the world No 7. says. "I think if I continue the progress I've made in the last five or six months, the quarter-finals of a [Grand] Slam is not what I'm going to be looking for. I'm going to be get-

ting to the finals and winning them." Rusedski, the world No 9, has simarea where it's three, two or one, and

TIM HENMAN

1998 highlights

■ Successfully defended Presi-

(beat Andre Agassi in the final)

dent's Cub in Tashkent (defeated

Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the final)

Won Swiss Indoors title in Basle

Finalist in Sydney (lost to Karol

Finalist in Los Angeles (lost to

1973 (No 10 on 17 August)

■ 100th player to reach the top 10 since ATP world rankings began in

Second British player to qualify

for ATP Tour Championship (after Rusedski in 1997)

First British semi-finalist at the

1998 prize-money: (\$1,448.77) (£905,481)

ATP Tour Championship (lost to

Career high: No 7 (Nov 1998)

1992 1993 1994

1995

1996

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Pete Samprasi

Kucera)

Andre Agassi)

I've gotten to the finals (at the 1997 United States Open], but I've never taken the next step of winning one. Those are my objectives for next

The Canadian-born Rusedski was sent to Coventry the other day, the reason for the visit providing further evidence of his integration as a British competitor. Jaguar Cars announced that Rusedski had joined their world-wide marketing campaign, and them waved him off in a brand new XK8 convertible. Henman, who numbers Mercedes Benz among his sponsors, recently collected a new C43 and decided to buy the SLK he had been driving.

In the case of most leading tennis players, endorsements and advertising deals for all manner of goods, including tennis clothing and equipment, are estimated to be worth up to four or five times what they earn in prize-money. The 25year-old Rusedski's career winnings total \$4,098,251 (£2,561,406). Henman, aged 24, has won \$3,277,128 (£2,048,205).

Success quickly provides financial security, but the quest for titles seldom is satisfied, and pride in performance usually takes care of motivation.

there have been some amazi ilar goals. "I've been to four in the and some amazing highs," Henworld," he says. "I'd like to get in that man says. "I think to finish No 7 is a good year. Then, when you look at to try to win at a Grand Slam level. it in a little bit more detail, you re-

Career high: No 4 (Oct 1997)

1998 highlights ■ Beat Pete Sampras in straight sets in the final of the Paris Open

to become the first British player to tvin an ATP Tour Super 9 event

■ Won the European Community

Marc Rosset in the final)
Finalist in Indian Wells (lost to

Marcelo Rios). Hit the fastest serve

Finalist in the Croatian Open In

Split (lost to Goran Ivanisevic)

the ATP Tour Championship and

beat Albert Costa and Tim Henman

Led the ATP Tour with the most

1998 prize-money: \$1,460,437 (£912,773)

Championship in Antwerp (beat

ever recorded (149moh)

indoor match wins (34)

End-of-year ranking Tied 1,103

Tied 603

117

GREG RUSEDSKI

THE STORY SO FAR

99 29

ilist (lost to

1989

1990

1992

alise the short periods that I've played good tennis. It's basically been half the year.

"In the last six months, I've really established myself in the top 10. The feeling inside me is that's not good

enough. I've got to go to the next level. "I'm going to be close to the too five, hopefully, in the not-too-distant future. [Pete] Sampras still stands out. I think I've beaten virtually everybody else. Hopefully I can beat him next year. There's no reason why I can't go right to the very top. Whether it happens next year or the year after, that's what I want."

An ankle injury deprived Rusedski of two months of the season, wrecking his Wimbledon prospects and leading to a parting from his coach, Tony Pickard. Rusedski, a resilient character, was able to raise his game again, helped by a new coach. the Dutchman Sven Groeneveld. "I think I just have to get the con-

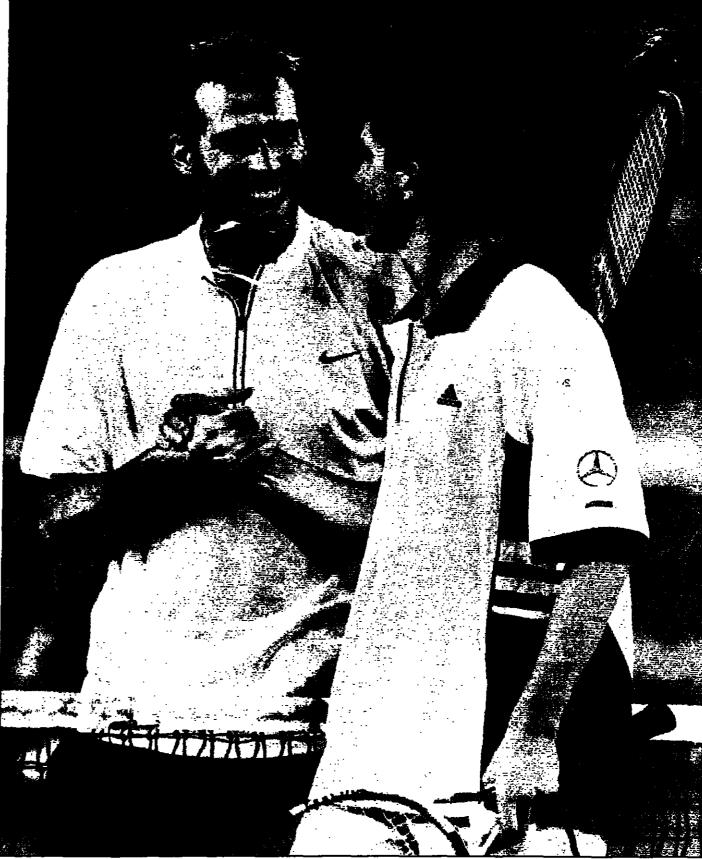
sistency to play at the top level all the time," Rusedski says, "improving the returns, improving the ground game, becoming more of an all-court player."

Whatever Henman and Rusedski accomplish in the meantime, rivalry will be set aside during the Easter weekend (2 to 4 April) for a major team effort against the United States in the first round of the "Looking back over the year, Davis Cup at Birmgham's National Indoor Arena (60 per ce 24,000 seats allocated for the three days of the tie have been sold, and the LTA is considering extra seating).

In any event, Rusedski emphasises that his goals are not confined to climbing back above Henman. "I'm not really worried about that any more," he says. "When you play each other, obviously you want to win. I'm looking more at the standard of trying to get somewhere I've never been before."

Your correspondent is reminded of Raich Carter, a master footballer, who once confounded a Derby County supporter who told him he was impressed with the unselfish manner in which Carter and his fellow international inside-forward Peter Doherty worked together. "When I run out to play a match," Carter said, "I visualise the back page headline, 'Brilliant Carter'. When Doherty runs out, he imagines the headline, 'Peter the Great'. And when the paper comes out, the headline is, 'Stamps scores hat-trick'."

Henman and Rusedski are similarly disposed to bolstering their reputations - likewise Sampras and Agassi - but tennis is altogether too individualistic for scene-stealing to be a by-product. "Wilkinson and Maclagan thrash Americans" ranks among the more improbable head-



Greg Rusedski (left) enjoys his victory over Tim Henman at the ATP Tour Championship in Hanover last month

Hancock's inside story on slaying of the Great Satan

THERE HAVE been enough World Cup documentaries these past few weeks to last us till 2002, but what one hopes was the last has claim to be among the best.

This is despite the fact that Outsiders (Channel 4, Sunday) appeared on the face of it to be suffering from a considerable handicap - the presence of Nick Hancock, whose foul mouth and incessant insults on They Think It's All Over have finally stopped being funny and become merely tiresome (which goes to show there is only so far you can go with bad language before it begins to grate and lose its power).

The reason the documentary. which centred on the Iranian squad. worked so beautifully was the fact that during the course of it, Hancock (who is married to an Iranian) and his co-presenter Andy Smart lost their hearts to the team described by guests," says Hancock. It was "un-

CHRIS MAUME

> SPORT ON TV

Hancock as "the last team to qualify, 500-1 outsiders, and the only country not to have a Chelsea player in their squad."

Their odyssey begins at the Italian embassy in Tehran, at a reception for the Iranian team, who are off the next day to training camp in Milan. Then it's on to the home of one of the players, Hamid Estilli, whose family are having a party to see him off.

"They treated us like honoured

comfortable, being so close to such an intimate occasion. It changed me in ways I never expected," says Hancock, affected by the "unforgettable sombreness and dignity". By the time they go to the airport to see the squad off, it's with the zeal of converts. Over in Italy, the Croatian coach,

Tomislav Ilic, has been sacked after a 7-1 defeat to Inter reserves, and the boys fear losing the access he had allowed them. But his replacement, Jaial Talibi, who, despite looking like Christopher Lee outdoes even the Croatian in the charm stakes. He is urbane and candid as he explains what went on with Ilic.

"We don't accept foreigners very fast," he says. "We have to know people... the feeling is much more important for us, Mr Ilic didn't know how to make contact with the players he was far away from them, both emotionally and intellectually."

Over in France, they stick with the team as they prepare for their first game, against Yugoslavia, in an atmosphere of "eerie intensity and calm". They are more than just programme makers by this point.

"We cared," says Hancock. "We were really really really bothered something we hadn't expected." During the game itself they go native, joining in a chant that bears the

subtitle "Stick the tap of a samovar up your arse". When Yugoslavia score from a free-kick, they despair. At the chateau in Yssingeaux where the team is staying (given the fact that it doubles as the National Patisserie Centre, perhaps winning the World Cup should have been a piece of cake), Hancock and Smart attempt to cheer up the players, who are angry over a showing on French TV the night before of the movie Not

Without My Daughter, which por-

trays Tehran as a Nightmare City and the Iranians as devils. Subbuteo is the answer, though H 'n' S have to paint their own Iranian team over breakamount to much: "A cigarette does over, "Vallum would have been a betnot represent all the major food groups," Hancock tells him).

They get to know the players well - Azizi, for example, called "Suzuki" by his team-mates because he's small but makes a lot of noise. As the lads play a game of foot-volleyball with two of the squad, the integration is near complete. They are less like

TV presenters, more like grouples. Smart goes back to Tehran while Hancock sticks around in France. In Lyons, the team spend their time on the coach on the way to their confrontation with the Great Satan, the United States, mostly reading the Koran as religious music plays softly in a nice sequence of cuts back and

forth between France and Iran, the with the team. You can tell all obfilm builds the tension. Andy is in a jectivity has gone out of the window restaurant smoking from a hookah. ter option,"

When Iran score, Hancock explodes, bug-eyed. By the end of a draining, nerve-racking game (one of the most exciting games of the entire competition, even for neutrals). it's as if he was at the Britannia Stadium watching his beloved Stoke: "Those boys have done me proud out there today," he says.

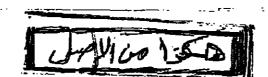
In Tehran, Andy joins the three million on the streets. They might not get drunk there, but they still know how to party. Back at the hotel, Hancock greets every one of the return-

ing heroes with a sizable smacker. Before the final group game, against Germany, Hancock hangs out deleted) They Think It's All Over?

when he wraps up an interview with "For what unfolded over the next 90 Hamid by saying, "I'm shaking the fast (which in Smart's case, does not minutes," Hancock says on the voice- hand of the most famous man in the world," and appearing to mean every

At the game, it all goes horribly wrong, and the Germans prevail. By the end. Hancock is gutted. "I fell like I could sleep for two weeks," he says.

Despite returning at three in the morning, the team have a riotous welcome at Tehran airport, and even Smart is mobbed and raised shoulder high. Hancock is with the team, and the pair take Hamid home for an emotional 14-hour celebration. The experience has changed them, and they have clearly derived huge pride from their experience. Can we have more of this kind of thing from Hancock, and less of that (expletive



Harvest for choosy punters

CHRISTMAS IS an ideal time to renew acquaintance with old friends, and there are plenty of those racing around the country this afternoon. Oh So Risky, Cab On Target and The Grey Monk are among the horses who will be running beyond the spotlight of Kempton Park this afternoon, on a day when the bookmakers would like nothing more than for punters to scribble every name that rings a bell on to the first available betting

It is very easy to get carried away on Boxing Day, and if your bookie sent you a card this year, then you are probably the sort of punter who needs to exercise as much caution as possible. If you find yourself having a dabble in the second division of the Brandy Butter Handicap at Wolverhampton, the very last race on one of the busiest days of the year, you should have been home at least two hours ago.

Try and stick to the better events, like the Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase at Wetherby, in which The Grey Monk is taken on by Strath Royal, who is something of a course specialist, and Colonel In Chief, the mount of Richard Dunwoody, who rides here in preference to Kempton, where he could not find a ride in the King George. It is Random Harvest (2.25), though, who of all with just 10st to carry.

Dunwoody also rides Celes-Inn. who won the Glasgow where in the country today.

WETHERBY

HYPERION

12.45 Aren't We Lucky 1.15 Ballad Minstrel

1.50 Once For Luck 2.25 Random Harvest

ADMISSION: Club £13 (accompanied under 16s free), Tattersalis

99: Course £3 (OAPs £1.50) or £10 per car with up to four adults.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 37-176 (21%), T Easter

by 30-126 (23.8%). D Nicholson 17-78 (21.8%), Mrs S Smith 16-98

M LEADING JOCKEYS: L Wyer 46-174 (254%), P Niven 33-150 (22%), A Dobbin 21-119 (175%), R Guest 17-83 (205%).

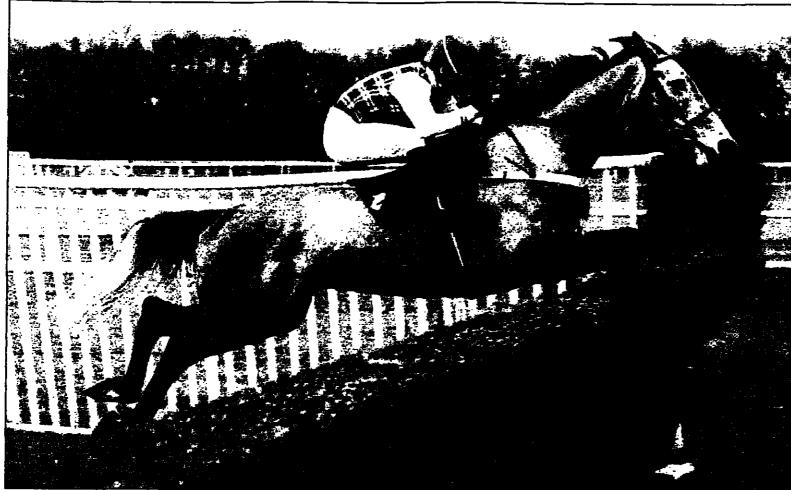
12.45 BOXING DAY NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (D) 53,800 2m 4f 110yds

ELeft-hand oval carcus. Run in of 200 yds stightly uphil. ■ Course is NE of lown on B1224 near junction of A58 and A1.

2.55 Eirespray 3.25 Lord Lamb

Accompanied under 16s free CAR PARK: Free

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.



Old favourite: The Grey Monk may be one of the most popular horses in training but faces a stiff task at Wetherby today

looks to have the best chance Stakes on the Flat in 1997 and ran respectably in the Derby soon afterwards. With Lord tial Choir, who takes on Cab On Lamb contesting the same Target in the Supermaster novice hurdle, this is possibly Handicap Chase, and Symonds the best race of its type any-

desperately sad shadow of the horse who once won a Triumph Hurdle by 15 lengths, is an action at Wincanton, though he should be no match for Papo Kharisma (2.35), while Way-

FORM VERDICT

Straffen Gold is an obvious contender after his unlucky de-

leat by Russian Aspect at Catterick last time, but this can go to MISTY CLASS, whose Towcester form worked out quite well, and is better than his last run at Carliste suggests. Domi-

1.15 GEORGE GREGORY NOVICE CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m

F21-1 AGHAWADDA GOLD (28) (D) T Tate 6 11 2 ... R Garristy
B4-21 BALLAD MINSTREL (10) (D) J Fiz/Gerald 6 11 9.JR Durwoody 8
005/4 BITOFA DIVIL (14) C Brennan 7 11 4 ... M Brennan
7500- ECLIPTIC MOON (339) (D) C Pogson 8 11 4 2nd Preference
20-U2 FOUNDRY LANE (21) (CD) (SF) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 4

FORM VERDICT

strel and Aghawadda Gold are his obvious dangers in a race

1.50 ST JOHN AMBULANCE HANDICAP HURDLE (C) £5,500 added 2m

P3-4TI ONCE MORE FOR LUCK (21) (CD) Mrs M Reveloy 7 TI 13

M H Naughton (5)
0c2520 CALLICER (21) (CD) (BF) M Barnes 5 TI 10 ... S Taylor
P-5064 SHNNING EDGE (14) (CD) T Easterby 6 11 6 R Garnftly
43221 TOSHIBA TALK (28) (D) B Elison 5 11 5 ... Mr K R O'Ryan (7)

copt of weight from his two mals, FOUNDRY LANE looks

Oh So Risky, who is now a ward King (2.05) must stand way in the Hennessy Gold Cup, maining meetings with much to every chance of winning the against Menesonic (3.05), who Mid Season Chase for the second year in a row. On the same Teeton Mill over this course two card, the Lord Stalbridge runs ago. That looks to be the Memorial Gold Cup pits Fine best form on offer. Thyne, who ran well for a long

was just eight lengths adrift of

offer casual punters. Santa Concerto (2.35) looks to be a horse on the upgrade, and there could certainly be no more appropriate winner this

- 12 declared -Manmum weight. 10st. True handicap weights. Birel Suspence 9st 11lb, Sous. Warnor Str Str SETTING: 7-2 Straffan Gold, 4-1 Russian Aeped, Misty Class, 6-1 Aren't We Lucky, 7-1 Kind Prince, 10-1 Helmsley Filer, Winters Keep, 12-1 others

SETTING: 7-4 Once More For Luck, 4-1 Cauther, 9-2 Toshiba Talk, 7-1 Nahri, 8-1 Shining Edge, Eponina, 14-1 Maraud FORM VERDICT

Conditions looks ideal for ONCE MORE FOR LUCK, who has been in splendid form this year, both on the Flat and over hur-dies. Coulibrar, who no below par when behind him last time, is expected to lare much better this time.

2.25 ROWLAND MEYRICK HANDICAP CHASE (B) £20,000 added 3m 1f

131-53 THE GREY MONK (14) (D) N Flicterics 10 11 10 A Dobbin P-505 STRATH ROYAL (15) (CD) O Brennen 12 10 13 ... M Brennen

1-421 RANDOM HARVEST (21) (CD) Nrs M Reveloy 9 10 0

FORM VERDICT side with course specialist STRATH ROYAL to best his younger rivals. River Lossie and Random Harvest both rare as big dangers, and The Grey Monk has dropped down to a fair

2.55 SUPERMASTER HANDICAP CHASE (B) £10,500 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 42403 CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE (14) (CD) T Easierby 9 11 11 2 F1-522 EIRESPRAY (21) (D) (BF) Mrs S Smrth 7 11 9 S Durget

1USP-3 ANABRANCH (78) (D) J Jefferson 7 11 4 G Tormey ITUS- CELESTIAL CHOIR (F228) (CD) (BF) J L Eyre 8 TI 4.......

FORM VERDICT MAITRE DE MUSIQUE, who ran as though needing the race

on his reappearance at Ayr, can take this tricky handicap Ce-lestial Choir, who tooks on a fair mark, and Forestal, who was a shade unlucky last time, look his main dangers. 3.25 CHRISTMAS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) \$3,800 added 2m

14/11 LORD LAMB (12)(D) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 10Mr A Dempssy (3)
11 SYMONDS ROW (51) (D) J Fiz/Gerald 4 11 11 ..., R Dempssy (3)
10 SYMONDS ROW (51) (D) J Fiz/Gerald 4 11 11 ..., R Dempssy (3)
000-06 COME AND RUN (12) M W Essterby 4 10 12 Mr K R O'Ryan (7)
000-4 CURTAINSATCHOPPMELL (18) T Essterby 4 10 12 ... R Garnity
30 DEE PEE CIEE (32) M W Essterby 4 10 12 ... B Fenton
68 GYMCRAK JESTER (14) M Barnes 4 10 12 ... S Taylor
19-05 MSSTER SANDROWTH (30) (87) R Fartey 5 10 12 5 Durack
30.0 GREADS EMPSAN (14) O Berosco

FORM VERDICT

Although this might appear to concern only Lord Lamb and Symonds tim, who are both unbeaten over hurdles, the value bet could be the newcomer CASHABERE LADY, who receives nty of weight, and is a half-sister to Cele was a decent hurder before she went over fences.

AYR

12.55 Major Sponsor 1.25 Wynyard Knight 2.00 Course Doctor 2.35 Feels Like Gold 3.10 Scotmall Lad 3.40 Kris Green

■ Left-hand galloping course; run-in 210yds. ■ Course is E of fown on A758. Ayr station (service from Glasgow) 1m. ADMISSION: Club E14: Grandstand E7 (OAPs half-FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS ■ LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 24-136 (176%), L Lungo 19-144 (132%), J J O'Nell 19-109 (165%), P Montellin 17-124 (137%)

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 37-170 (218%), 8 Store, 151 (158%), P Niven 19-115 (165%), R Supple 13-69 (188%). SLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

12.55 MOTHER GOOSE 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (E) £3,500 added 2m

513-1 MAJOR SPONSOR (82) (D) G M Moore 6 11 5 J Callaghan 00-212 MR BUSSY (18) (D) (BF) Mrs M Reveley 5 11 5. ___ P Nivan 0-P SURWYMAN (41) C Parker 4 10 12. ____ Mr B Gibson (7) 101-22 CRAZY HORSE (41) (D) (BF) L Lungo 5 10 12. ___ R Supple 4 GOLDENGROWN SIN (31) M Techanist 4 10 12. ____ C

BETTING: 2-1 Mr Busby, 9-4 Major Sponsor, 11-4 Crazy Horse, 12-1 Toggi Dancer, 14-1 Knockers Fair, 16-1 Goldenbrown Sun, 33-1 others

It would be dangerous to write off the well-regarded Crazy Horse even though he has cost his supporters a packet so far this term but MAJOR SPONSOR, who is said to be in good form again after njury, could turn out to be a title special and may be worth tollowing until besten. Mr Busby has already shown himself useful in two hundles wentures and is s threat, while Knockera Fair had lo

1.25 GOOSE NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m

- å declared -BETTING: 1-2 Wynyard Knight, 7-4 Rossel, 25-1 Strong Miselon, 33-1 Turkish Tower FORM VERDICT

WYNYARD KNIGHT, who had not jumped that well over fences behind other horses at home, was very good when allowed to stride on in making an impressive chasing debut here last month and cannot be opposed. Gossel, officially rated his superior over hundles, was a well-beaten third that day and can hardly be tancied to turn the tables on just 6th better terms.

2.00 MIDWINTER NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (E) £4,500 added 2m 4f

FORM VERDICT

COURSE DOCTOR, regarded by connections as unlucky on the two occasions he has failed to complete, is well thought of and may be good enough to defy his 8th rise in the hand-icap. Supreme Soviet is handly weighted but a bigger threat could be June's River, who gives the impression he is open

2.35 GAIETY THEATRE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3m 1f

1312/1 SANTA CONCERTO (19) (CD) L Lungo 9 11 10R Supple P111/-1 FEELS LIKE GOLD (26) (CD) N Richards 10 11 9....B Handing F4-161 ASK ME LATER (28) (C) (D) Mrs S Bradburne 9 11 6 3-112 90.SGRTH (19) (C) (BF) J Bardsy 7 to 10C McCommats (3) 4(h) F SUNNY LETH (324) (CD) P Montenth 7 10 0 _ ____ O Parker _ 5 declared =

Miranum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Sumy Leith 9st 5tb. BETTING: 9-4 Santa Concerto, 5-2 Feels Lifus Gold, 100-30 Solsgirth 9-2 Ask Me Later, 25-1 Sunny Leith. FORM VERDICT

Unless struck down by the second-run-back syndrome, SANTA CONCERTO, a staying handicap chaser with a tuture, looks sure to confirm this month's C&D superiority over Solsgirth. He has more to fear from Feets Like Gold, who is admirably progressive over tences and created a good impression when

3.10 GLAIKIT GUSSIE 'NH' NOVICE HUR-DLE (CLASS E) 23,500 added 2m 4f

-10 decisred BETTING: 2-1 Teefin Bay, 3-1 Scotmell Led, 7-2 Kingennie, 7-1 Ayekmouso, 12-1 Burits Boy, 16-1 Jaumiy General, Stephen's Braz, 25-1 others

SCOTMAIL LAD has proved his defeat of Crazy Horse at Cartisle was no fluke and is given a narrow vote over Kingenuite, who is almost certainly better than than she showed at Newcastle last time. Teelin Bay books pick of the

3.40 SQUIRE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 4f

F32-46 INGLETONIAN (28) (CD) B Maclaggert 9 12 0 ... B Storey 0045- HOME COUNTIES (448)(C)(D) J Herierton 9 12 0 D J Modinal 20332 ROBBO (14) (C) Mrs Reveley 4 to 8 ... P Niven B 4627- ATTADALE 284) (D) A Outlen 10 11 2 ... C McCormack (3) 213/6 FORBIDDEN TIME (12) L Lungo 10 to 0 ... Mr B Gibson (7) 13-601 KRIS GREEN (12) (D) L Lungo 4 10 9 (6ex) ... R 30446 COTTSTOWN BOY (11) (CD) Mrs S Bradaume 7 10 7.

- 7 declared -BETTING: 9-4 Kris Green, 5-2 Attaclala, 11-4 Robbo, 9-1 Cottstown Boy 12-1 Horae Counties, Ingintonian, 16-1 Forbadden Time FORM VERDICT

KRIS GREEN, a good-looking sort who will not be over-raced before going chasing, has an obvious chance to supplement this months Newcastle gains. Robbo, who is again blinkered. has run well in detect on his last two starts and looks the

WINCANTON

1.00 My Tern 1.30 Cool Gunner 2.05 Wise King 2.35 Papo Kharlsma 3.05 Betty's Boy 3.35 Lizzy's First

GOING: Soft (Good to Soft in places). GUING: SOIT (GOOD to SOIT IT PIACES).

■ Right-hend, galloping course Run-in of 200yds.

■ Course is NE of town on B308t Templecombe station (service from London, Waterloo) 4m. ADMISSION: Members £14;

Tatlersalis £9; Course (and cars to course) £4 (Under-16s free into all enclosures). CAR PARK: Free

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS ILEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 37-149 (248%), P Nicholis 35-122 (265%), R Aimer 17-121 (14%), P Hobbs 13-105 (123%), ILEADING JOCKEYS: R Dynwoody 23-104 (221%), A P McCoy 22-113 (195%), J Oeborne 12-57 (211%), A Thornton 12-60 (20%) FAVOURITES: 169-419 (379%).

1.00 M & J PICTURES MARE 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (E) £3,000 added 2m

FORM VERDICT An unrespring race with which to start the festivities. Peg O The Wood, Proper Primitive and Soloism cannot be ruled out, but the wirmer is most likely to be either My Term or SILK VESTMENTS. The Venetis Williams-trained contender gets the vote on the strength of her bumper form and effectiveness on a soft surface.

1.30 HARRY DUFOSEE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m

Only the seven declared, but a competitive race. Cool Gun-ner will be popular effect he win over Get Real on his letest start, particularly as none of the others showed their form last time. However, MORSTOCK's taken to do so came with an early fell and Coolteen Hero was still traveling well enough when he was brought down five out. Morstock has gained three of his lour wins at this track and is the one to beat with a reproduction of what he showed in this event in 1997

2.05 MID SEASON CHASE (INTERMEDIATE RACE) (B) £10,500 added 2m 5f 12-6 STORMY PASSAGE (14) (D BF) F Hobbs 8 11 2....R Ferrant P31-2 WAYWARD KING (14) (CD) (BF) R Hodges 6 11 2.....

11-PP4 THE LAND AGENT (14) (D) J Malins 7 ft 6 Philos 3/11-3 WISE KING (46) (D) (67) J Ctd 6 ft 4 J J Cultory B 20/314 SRLENT CRACKER (D) M Person 6 ft 12 J Cultory B -5 declared -BETTING: 5-4 Stormty Passage, 11-4 Wise King, 7-2 Weyward King, 5-1 The Land Agent, 8-1 Silent Cracker FORM VERDICT

Stormy Pessage is unquestionably the one they all have to begt at these weights but he does not always find much under pressure, as the Tripleprint last time and his meeting with The Land Agent at Ascol both demonstrated. WAYWARD KING is the one most likely to benefit from a repeat, although Wise

2.35 STAKIS CASINOS HANDICAP HUR-DLE (QUALIFIER) (CLASS B) £10,000 addęd 2m 6f

3(360- MOR'S FLUTTER (F70) (D) D Esworth 9 to 13 . 6 F1F-33 MELODY MAID (21) (CD) (BF) N Handerson 6 10 2 2nd Preference
7 433-53 MISTER RM (14) N Twister-Devise 6 10 9 ... C Maude
8 1216- SSIZE THE DAY (234) (CD) (BF) M Counte 10 10 0

BETTING: 9-4 Papo Kharisma, 5-2 Melody Maid, 11-2 Allegation, 7-1 Seize The Day, Three Ferthings, 8-1 Oh So Ricky, Mister Ran, 16-1 Ivor'e Flutter

FORM VERDICT With Melody Meid heading for Kempton, this looks an excellent opportunity for PAPO KHARISMA. Three Farthings and Seize The Day make their reappearances and look interesting sorts for later in the season.

3.05 LORD STALBRIDGE GOLD CUP HANDICAP CHASE (B) £10,500 added

FORM VERDICT

Betty's Boy did well to win at Ulticoster after such a long absence but he should find it much tougher here against Fine Thysie and MENESCOMIC, with the latter preferred after show-ing his well-being already this term. Jultains is the other one

3.35 PARKERS CATERERS NOVICE HAN-DICAP HURDLE (E) £3,000 added 2m

BETTBIG: 7-2 Asvesaliss. 4-1 Lizzys First, 9-2 Golden Lity, 7-1 Trymy-ply, 8-1 Pietro Bembo, Krebiccolk, 12-1 Seper Mac., I Do The Jokes, Smokey Pete, Aficionado, 25-1 What A Foas.

FORM VERDICT Pietro Bernbo has one piece of form which gives him a fair chance and has the benefit of a recent run after a break. More solid credembals, however, are held by LIZZYS FIRST and Krabloonik. There is plenty to like about Krabloonik's two runs this season and he is expected to put up a bold show, but Exeter scorer Lizzye First is very hard to pass over.

WOLVERHAMPTON

1.00 Landriun 1.30 Elite Hope 2.05 Trojan Girl 2.40 Naked Oat 3.15 Weet-A-Minute 3.45 Bonne Ville 4.15 Sir Walter 4.45 Mike's Double

GOING: (All weather) Standard. STALLS: Inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: Uncertain.

■ Left-hand course; Fibresand surface.
■ Course is N of town on A449 Station Im. ADMISSION: Club €20; Tattersalls £10; Fewing Restaurant \$2890 including entrance and meal. Other restaurants are

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS ■ LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead 77-695 (111%), M Johnston 51-280 (218%)
J Berry 52-355 (146%), P Evans 45-444 (101%)
E LEADING JOCKEYS: J Weaver 65-311 (212%), S Sanders 49-368 (13.3%), Dear McKeown 37-306 (124%), G Duffield 38-234 (153.%)

■ FAVOURITES: 455 wers in 1429 races (318%)
BLINKERED FIRST TME: Weiting Knight (visored, 240), Sun Felry (visored, 345), Amber Report 1475

<u>ן</u> [1.00	PARSON'S NOSE HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV I) £3,000 added 1m 100yds
,	120086	ROLDE DANSE (10) (D) M Ourn 3913
Ιż		MOONSTONE (J30) B Baugh 3 9 7 A Cultume 9
Ιā		LANDREUN (24) (CD) H Collegridge 3 9 4 Dean McKeown 5
14	257200	MESS ALL ALONE (170) J Glover 3.9.3
5		ALLEZ CYRANO (J29) (C) D Burchel 7 8 t3 S Drowne 1
Ĭě		NEGHT AUCTION (10) 9 Poling 3 8 to
7	063001	SOMER SOLO (1156) Mass L Scotal 58 12 O Pears 12
8		HIGH NOON (31) N Letmoden 3 8 10
ğ		MICKLY MIUSIC (8) (D) G Margarson 4 8 8
10		FIX.L MOON (325) W Brisbourne 3 8 7 P Bradley (7) 7
- T		WAGGA MOON (181) M Brown 4 8 3
12		LADY OF THE LLINE (123) D Haydr Jones 382
1 2	40005	KANAWA (17) AP Jones 4 8 1 F Norton 2
1 ~		- 13 declared -

BETTING: 5-2 Rol De Dense, 3-1 Landrius, 9-2 Miss All Alone, 5-1 Night Auction, 7-1 Ma 10-1 High Noon, 14-1 Alex: Cyrano, 16-1 others

FORM VERDICT

A much weaker race than ROLDE DANSE has been contesting and he has definite prospects of defying top weight against rivels who win rarely. Landrium, runner-up in a seller here last time, looks the pick of the opposition.

1.30 BRANDY BUTTER HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV I)

- 10 decembre -

FORM VERDICT

The course specialist Elike Hope has not worn a handicap for two years and is vulnerable to an improver like BALANITA, who has not had livings go his way since winning at Windsor in July Hittoria Executive has solid place prospects, despite a disappointing run here last time.

2.05 CHRISTMAS PUDDING CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS E) 23,750 2YO 6f

FORM VERDICT

Northern Svengall is the best horse in the race but has not yet proved his ability to act on the surface and, as a result, TROJAN GIRL is preferred. Nick Littmoderns horses are running well and Trojan Girl was impressive last time

2.40 BREAD SAUCE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,000 added 1m 100yds | Court | Cour

FORM VERDICT

Plenty of its and buts in this maiden as most of the obvious contenders are un-proven on Fibresand. Perhaps first time on sand may be the right time to catch WAITING KNIGHT, who has the best form and has joined a yard that does well

3.15 PORT HANDICAP (CLASS C) £7,750 added 1m 1f 79yds

| Tim 11 7 9yos | 10 | A Polii (5) 7 | 20105 PMMARY COLDURS (35) (CD) J Pearce 3 to 0 | ... A Polii (5) 7 | 20105 PMMARY COLDURS (35) (CD) J Pearce 3 to 0 | ... A Polii (5) 7 | 20105 PMMARY (35) h Currengham-Brown 7 9 13 | ... R Price 1 | 300256 WEET-A-MINUTE (14) R Holinstead 5 9 7 | ... A Culhane 6 | 620210 SUPER MONARCH (J22) K Barke 4 8 5 | ... J Ouline 4 | 000311 BWZANTUJM (17) Lord Huntringdon 4 8 3 | ... Dafe Gibson 5 V 305000 DUKHAN (52) E Alston 4 8 1 | ... Michanie Worden (7) 2 | ... 40541 FARLED 10 HIT (14) (CD) N Littmoden 5 7 13 | ... J Tata 2 V 002001 BURNING (24) (C) N Littmoden 6 7 10 | ... R Thomas (7) 8 | ... R Thomas (7) 8 | ... B declared - ... B declared -

Minumum weight 7st 10tb. True handicap weight Burning 7st 7tb BETTING: 3-1 Primery Colours, 7-2 Byzantium, 9-2 Felled To Hit, 5-1 Puntahment, 11-2 Weet-A-Minute, 10-1 Super Monarch, 12-1 Burning, 25-1 Dukhan

FORM VERDICT Although he is unproven here, BYZANTIUM is in such good heart that he looks worth following off what could still be a potentially favourable mark. This drop back in trip is a worry for Primary Colours while it is possible that Failed To Hit is a bit flattered by his latest win here which came here on a very were evering. There are question marks about all the others, too.

3.45 TURKEY SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 added

365000 SLIPER PARK (40) J Pearce 6.9.4.

FORM VERDICT Bonne Ville has clear form claims now he reverts to a seller but SUN FAIRY, whose latest run suggested there was a lot more to come, definitely has the ability to win a race of this nature.

4.15 PARSON'S NOSE HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV II) £3,000 added 1m 100yds

FORM VERDICT There is a marked tack of solid recent AW form here. Amber Regent has definite claims on the form he showed here earlier in the year now he is back at his right trip and med binkered white Ring The Chief could make a bold show from the front. But preference is for DELIGHT OF DAWN, who is potentially well treated after just two tress on sand and has been found a modest contest today to take

4.45 BRANDY BUTTER HANDICAP (CLASS F) (DIV II)

	ᆫ		⊈ £3,000 added 6f
	1	000000	DAVIS ROCK (40) (CD) W Mur 4 10 0 Martin Daver 3
	2	000200	AFTER EIGHT (17) (D) M Saunders 3 9 12
	3	140000	MRSS DANGEROUS (14) (CD) M Quinn 3.9 10 F Norton &
	4	060083	THAAYER (25) K Bell 3 9 TO T Southe 2
i	5	040644	MIKE'S DOUBLE (10) (CD) Mrs N Macauley 4.8 (3) R Price B V
	6	233040	SOTONIAN (10) (C) P Felgate 5 8 8
	7	more.	NITE OWLER ALL (D) J Balding 4 B.5
1	18	D03056	RIVER ENSIGN (33) (D) (BF) W Brisbourne 5 8 1 P Brandley CN 16
	9	0004	MARY HANNAH (10) A Senor 5.7 (C)
	10	000600	KID ORY (19) (0) D Chapman 7 7 10 Jenny Benson (7) 6 B
- 1	_		= 10 doctored =

Minimum weight, 7st 10th True handicap weighter Mary Harmah 7st Sb, 10d Ory 7st 2b BETTING: 5-2 Milka's Double, 4-1 River Ensign, 9-2 Milte Owler, 11-2 Davis Rock, 8-1 Thatyer

A typically difficult Wolverhampton handicap which could be run 10 times and have 10 different results. Davis Rock and Theoryer will be popular but NITE OWLER has been running well of late and cart go well at a decent price.

King George VI Chase: The people's choice could prove to be only a pale version of Desert Orchid and One Man

Imperial Call can halt grey reign

GREY IS very much the colour of Kempton Park on Boxing Day, from the ashen faces of racegoers nursing industrialstrength hangovers, to the horses they love to back in the King George VI Chase. Desert Orchid and One Man became the most popular chasers in training on the back of their exploits in the King George, and between them account for six of the last 10 runnings. Now. there is a new white horse in town, and if Teeton Mill can follow their lead this afternoon, an Official Fan Club will not be far

Like his trainer, Venetia Williams, Teeton Mill has

RICHARD EDMONDSON Nap: See More Business (Kempton 2.20) **NB: Lord Of The River** (Kempton 1.10)

climbed towards the peak of jumps racing at astonishing speed. Less than 12 months ago, he was merely a promising hunter chaser, but he could well start favourite this afternoon for what is to some minds the best renewal of the King George for years.

When Teeton Mill was a 5-2 chance for the Hennessy Gold turned the race into a proces- Suny Bay on his seasonal reap-

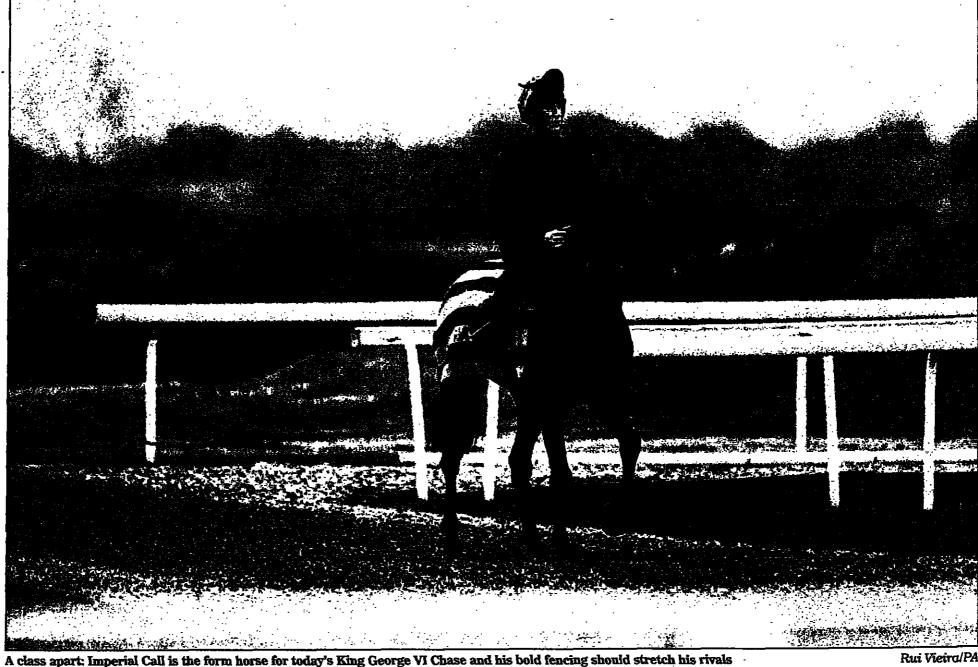
BY GREG WOOD

sion, his trainer commented that she found his odds "frightening". Given that he is the same sort of price for the most important weight-for-age chase outside the Cheltenham Gold Cup itself, Williams should perhaps be experiencing abject terror this morning. Instead, she simply says that she is "completely numb about the whole business".

What some punters - though not his trainer - seem to overlook, though, is that the bare form of Teeton Mill's Hennessy victory does not entitle him to set off at such a short price

"He's a grey horse and I think people look at him a bit like an iceberg," Williams says. "They assume that there are hidden depths there, but we will only find out on Saturday. He will get there fit and well, and the ground is not a worry because he has won on fast at Stratford and soft at Newbury. Softer ground would probably suit us, but equally it would suit See More Business.

It is See More Business, last year's winner, who is the main rival to Teeton Mill at the top of the betting, even though he has yet to show a similar level Cup just a few days before he of form this season. Beaten by



pearance, he then won a threerunner Rehearsal Chase, but made a couple of mistakes in the process.

This, perhaps, is the key to price. today's race. Greys may have a good record in the King George, but winning the race is not so much a matter of colour as of style. Bold front-runners can be very difficult to reel in

miles, and as luck would have it, there is just such a horse in today's field. Not only that, he will start at a very backable

IMPERIAL CALL (nap 2.20) has given every indication this season of having rediscovered the form which carried him to a Cheltenham Gold Cup less than three years ago, and around Kempton's flat three if See More Business attempts

to match him jump for jump at the head of the field, his fencing will be subjected to the sort of examination which it rarely promises to pass. Imperial Call is the form horse of the race, running on a track which should suit him ideally, and the only mystery is how on earth he can be available at around 4-1

has every chance of upsetting this morning. The second Grade One Lawahik and Grecian Dart in

event on the card, the Feltham

Novices' Chase, is rather less

tractable, with at least six of the

eight runners holding perfect-

ly credible claims on their best

form. Executive King (1.10) is

perhaps the value option, but

the opening novices' hurdle, while his stablemate Road and distance Racer (next best 1.45) is another worthwhile alternative to a hot favourite - Tuitchev this time - in the handicap hurdle.

Road Racer ran very well until

start was second in a Grade

two flights out on his reapthere are better bets elsepearance in the William Hill Jungli (12.40), for instance, Handicap Hurdle earlier this month, and on his previous

Two race over today's course Dines will be a short price for

the remaining televised event from Kempton, but there is a bonus for viewers in the shape of the Denny Gold Medal Novices' Chase from Leopardstown. Promalee, one of Ireland best novices, will attempt to win for the fourth time in as many

KEMPTON

12.40 Lawahik 1.10 EXECUTIVE KING (nap) 1.45 Decoupage

2.20 Imperial Call (nb) 2.55 Soloman 3.25 Melody Maid

GOING: Good to Soft;

Right-hand course. Practically flat. Run-in of 200yd. Course is on A308 at Sunhury (Rus 80k from Richmond & Hatton Cross Underground PARK; Members C2: rest free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS E LEADING TRAINERS: D Nicholson '9 wrs from 67 runners (284%), R Ainer 15-43 G45%), N Henderson 12-68 (175%), N Twiston-Davies 10-52 (192%), E LEADING JOCKEYS: J Osborne 22 wns from 73 rides (301%), M A Fitzgerald 21-115 (R3%), A Maguire 20-73 (258%), R Dunwoody 5-85 (20%).

II FAVOURITES: 122 was from 289 races (success rate 42.2%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: None.

LONG DISTANCE TRAVELLER: Kinnescash (145) has been sent 235 miles.

l				
Į	42	AC	TI PERTEMPS MANAGED SERVICES NOVICE	C_4
l	12.	40	HURDLE (B) £10,000 2m Penalty Value £7,133	U4
١		20 44	ALHOSAAM (30) (N Clerk) G L Moore 4 Ti 10.	A P McCo
ł		3 F11	white, red strong disholo on steayes, strong cap	-A P MICLO
ı	2	1251	GRECIAN DART (23) (D) (Lord Weinstack) N Henderson 6 11 10	A Filtranorsk
ı	-		pale blue, white and vellow check cap	n , milanta
ı	3	1	LAWAHIK (14) (D) (J Joseph) C Marm 4 11 10	_C Liewelly
ı			royal blue, red apols, black cap, white spots	-
ı	4 -7	3320	FOLLOW THE LEADER (20) (D) (Lesselan Farms) R Hurley (M) 5 11 5,	d Tezan
١			royal blue and yellow diabolo, yellow sleaves and cap	
ı	5 2	3-31	JUNGLI (7) (D) (Mrs P Starley) P R Webber 5 ft 5	J Osbona
ı	6		emerald green, white epoulets and cap	u www
ı	•	3 9 17	MAGIC CIRCLE (600) (D) (T Bersfeld & W Brown) N Handerson 6 11 5! yellow, brown steeves, yellow armiets	A ALIMBRIAN
ı	7		MOONDARGA (NZ) (F350) (Sir Eric Parler) Mrs A Perrett 5 11 5	G Bradle
ı			light blue, white gross-belts, red gap	
l	В	120-	RUNNING WATER (283) (D) (H Spooner) P Hedger 5 11 5	A Maguin
ı	8		id green, white chevrons, emerald green sleeves, white cap, emerald gre	
ı	9	5	YEOHAN OF THE GUARD (47) (Mrs H Alveri) R Rove 5 ft 5	FI Johnson
ı	10		yellow rad chewors on body	4 75
ı	W	0-3	ZURS (23) (C Sieward) J Poulton 5 11 5	. A I ROMQ
١			groy, park stars, receptor sectors and sea on cap - 10 declared -	
١	BETTIN	G: 94	Grecian Cort, 3-1 Lemahik, 5-1 Jungli, 6-1 Follow The Leader, 7-1 Ali	osaam. 12-
ı			20-1 Moondarga, Ruming Water, 33-1 others	
ı	1997: Er	intent	e 4 11 0 Mr T Doumen 9-1 (F Doumen, Fr) 7 ran	
ż				

FORM GUIDE

Althosaam: Odds-on win in maiden hide at Fontwell (soft) on seasonal debut franked by Copper Coin (3rd)) and should again beat Yeoman Offine Guard who was fifth. Was more impressive next time on good ground at Taunton. Grecian Datt: Beaten at Ascot and Chettenham before a cosy 8-tength win from My Lisa Too in lower grade at Windsor (good to soft). Probably improving Lawrehitic Very pleasing hundling debut at Haydock(soft) where he led at the last before winning by 3 lengths from Subtle finitience. Well-regarded Follow The Leader: Has been consistent since winning a maiden hole at Gowran in September, beaten narrowly in good Leopardstown handicap last time, imperial Calls

stablemente
Jungil: Bolted up at odds-on at Uttowerer (soft) on Saturday to turther frank the form
of his previous third to Hidebound at Newbury (good to soft)
Megle Circle: Neven bumper winner in 1997 and later bought for 50,000 gns at Doncaster. Probable second string behind Grecan Dart
Moondarga: New Zealand-bred son of Touching Wood. Interesting newcomer
Riuming Water: Won Huntingdon NH Flat race last season before a good second to
Lord Of The Flies under his penalty at Doncaster. Down the field in Champion Bumper
at Cheltenham Festival but was eased when chance had gone. One to leap an eye on
Yeoman Offine Guand: Promising fifth to Alhossam on Fontwell debut but clearly held
on that

Zurs: Appeared not quite to get the trip when severith to Shahrur at Windsor, but on this sharp track could go wall if going not too testing VERDICT: JUNGLI may not have besten very much when landing the odds at Ut-lowster on Saturday, but could not have been more impressive and lent further cra-dence to his Newbury form when he finished third to Hidebound. Hidebound's stablemate contact to this resoluting from miner the immerce area to Halabound, Halabound's stablemate Grectain Dart found an easy opportunity at Windsor and with his attable in form should not be discounted, but the main danger in a fascinating opener is fixely to be Lawahilic. Charlie Mann's charge was well-fanced to make a winning hurding debut at Haydock and justified the confidence with a smooth 3-length victory. Alhoseam is more highly bried after victories at Fontwell and Taunton.

1.10 NETWORK DESIGN FELTHAM NOVICE CHASE Grade 1 (A) £35,000 3m Penalty Value £22,715

amerated green, white stars, emerate green cap, who etair

F221 NMO DEE (21) (G Diger) P Beaumont 8 11 7 L Wyer
grey maroon hoop, meroon severes, grey amilias, quartiend cap

311-15 SONG OF THE SWORD (43) (BF) (Lady Logod Webbar) J Old 5 11 7 L G Bradley
parts and grey diamonds, park cap

21-11 SPENDIO (15) (Air S Carlierwood) D Michalton 6 11 7 L A Magazine
through construction and amilias to present and mercon, grey disc and armists, queriered cap GETTING: 9-4 Specifid, 7-2 Mister Morose, 5-1 Executive King, 7-1 kbee, Song Of The Sword, 8-1 Lord Of The River, 10-1 King Of Sparts, 25-1 Nikt Dee 1997: Fidding The Facts 6 tf 2 M A Ritzgerski 5-2 (N Henderson) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

Executive King: Progressive young sort who was well placed to win at Market Rasen, here and at Newbury before stepped up to Grade 2 at Lingfield (2m, soft) where he won by 17 lengths from Lord Of The River (gave 4b) who lost his chance with an error at the second last lence. Raised again in class but in fine form tribes: Smart portion who converted well to regulation fences with wins at Worcester and Chepstow. Unsubsidely smort pace in Red Marquér's race at Ascot last time and was pulled up, will be suited by who and any cave in the company. was pulled up. Will be surted by trip and any give in the ground King Of Sparta: Tall-swisher who benefited from Mister Morose's poor performance

at Chetenham last time, but even so ran on gamely to win by half a length from Sco-be Nostra. On a five-timer but faces hardest task to date Lord Of The Rilver: Mistake and stumbled 2 fences out when a couple or so lengths Loro un time rower: Mistake and stumbled 2 fences out when a couple or so lengths behind Executive King at Lingfield. Has 4th pull and should be suited by trip and going Mister Morose: Had off-day at Cheltenham tast time when not particularly fanced despite short price. Much better judged on his chasing debut at Cheltenham where he quickened well to beat subsequent scorers Dines and Desent Mountain NBd Dee: Northern raider well regarded by his shrewd trainer. Improved a lot on his chasing debut at Market Rasen (form worked out well) when beating Foundry Lane at Wetherby

of other Sword: Made running but made errors and was headed after mistake t before 22 lengths third of 5 to Spandid (gave 2b) at Cheltenham addid has won all three starts (Wetherby and twice at Cheltenham) since switch-

tays well and soft going will sud ERDICT: SPENDID looks to have a solid chance the will suit thin as well as Weitherby and Chelstonian, where he has won his charses to date, is one of the ingredients to help make this an intriguing contest between the young staying novices. Executive King has been the star of the Hubbard stable the season and could again take a lot of beating, while Mister Morose was runnoured to have been working poorly at home prior to his Cheltanham run a fortnight ago.

1.45 PERTEMPS CITY NETWORK HANDICAP HURDLE (B) £10,000 2m Penalty Value £6,853

40-1 Danegold 1997: Seranus 4 10 12 M A Fitzgerald 11-4 jt lav (N Henderson) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

Thutchev: Followed most encouraging Newbury reappearance with a very easy vic-tory over Sir Talbot at Cheltenham. Danagold: Hear sin a couple of stinkers on ground too soft for him since rattling up an early season hat-trick. Looks too high in the weights and ground likely to be ad-

verse
Serenus: Beaten 2 lengths by Polar Prospect in the valuable William Hill Hurdle at Sandown
where Shahrur and Road Racer were eighth and tenth. Stable in form and fixely to run
well again. Won this rece lest year
Decoupage: Beaten 5 lengths by Wahiba. Sands at Newbury lest time when Executive Decision was eighth. Previously in front of Kinnescash and Denegold when fourth
to Gray Shot at Cheltenham. Holds his form and course should suit
Kinnescash: Consistent sort who won by 4 lengths from Caulker at Antiree lest time.
A leading contender on that form

A leading contender on that form Road Racer. Ran with promise on Sandown reappearance and had Shahrur (gave 7tb) 5 lengths back in fourth when second to Buddy Marvel here in February. Suited by track and acts on soft by track and acce on sort Runaway Renegade: Lightly-raced winning hurdler who has been highly tried but was excellent lifth of 15 to Zafarabad at Punchestown in April Shahnur: is suffering from excellent campaign last season but could not be ruled out es: In good form and best Truancy (rec 4lb) at Forstwell earlier this month.

King Of Thieves: In good form and best inuancy (rec way at runtwest earlier in posterior and the more on piste.)

Classic Eagle: Driven out at Huntingdon to win by a head from Tashreef (rec 28lb) and though raised in class not without a chance.

Neat Feat: In good from this season and was ready 6 lengths winner from Nazir (rec 14lb) at Wincarnton last time. Hold-up honse who looks best of the bottom weights Balladur: Behind Neat Feat on Wincarnton reappearance. Not an obvious contender VERDICT: Tlutchev won unextended at Cheltenham fast time but this is a far tougher accession a small different course, and one is wary of probable short-priced favourities. proposition, a totally different course, and one is wary of probable short-priced favourities in hot handleap hurdles. ROAD RACER is the one to catch the eye. This sort of course suits her extremely well, and he ran well for a long way on his Sandown debut when last year's winner of this race, Serenus, was second. Decoupage has solid claims for

2.20 PEHTEMPS KING GEORGE VI CHASE (Grade 1) (A) £100,000 3m Penalty Value £64,360

royal blue and yellow diabolo, yellow steaves 843-0 MULLIGAN (14) (C) (Lady Harris D Nicholson 8 11 10_

white, Diack seems, whee and yellow halved skewes, yellow cap

— 9 declared =

SETTING: 5-2 See More Business, 11-4 feation still, 4-1 imperial Call, 5-1 Simply Dashing, 15-2

Escartefigue, 14-1 Challenger Du Luc, 18-1 Super Tactics, 25-1 Coome Hill, 33-1 Mixiligen

1997 See More Business 7 til 10 A Thomion 10-1 (P Nichole) 8 rati

FORM GUIDE Challenger Du Luct Beaten 2 lengths by See More Business in last year's race (would not go past). but on the side since Disapporting 25 lengths 4th in Murphy's Gold Cup and 13 lengths 7th of 10 to Direct Route at Sendown (2th ct. good; latest starts Coome Hill: 1996 Hernessy Gold Cup winner but having problems since and first win since Feb 97 when beating Samlee 2 lengths at Ascot (2th ct. staft) in October.

Lied early but pulled up 4 out in Hennessy at Newbury last month and difficult to fancy Escartefigue: Leading home-trained staying nonce last season, firsthing 2nd in Sun Aliance Chase. Promising 5 lengths 2nd to Suny Bay at Haydock tast month, but below-form last of 3 to See More Business at Chepstow (3m hoap ch. good) tatest. Sometimes tooks less than hearty battler and has something to find at this top level imperial Call: 1996 Gold Cup winner, back to his best this season with whis at Lim-erick, Naas and Punchestown, beating Dorans Price 11. lengths last time (2m4f ch. heavy). Front-runner and other spectacular jumper who will want plenty of bearing whitingant: Hardward protein by entance jumping since time retrieve career and back to hundring last backend. Promising 36 lengths 8th of the Northern Sacriff at in Trailering and Cold Cup (eased after faded 3 out), but unproven over this timp and difficult to assess See More Business: Last years 2-length without into Challerings Du Linc Laire carried out in Gold Cup but back to form at Chepstow latest (8 m haze et a coord) to go Samourau a length Makes mistakes but a fighter who will be a bugh rult to crack agent. Simply Dashing: Wind problems since very promising Ascat win in Autumn 97, but fast-finishing length 2nd to Cyfor Malta in Murphys Gold Cup (2m-f) and staying on 1/2 length numer-up to Northern Staright at Chelterham (2m5f hoap ch. good to soft)

The region furnise-up to recomment stategate at Contegration particular in cap call good to sortly latest. Should be suited by this course and by no means out of it.

Super Tectios: Goes particularly well here, winning Racing Post Chase last February from Land Alax Back to best when beeting Bertone at Wincanton (2m.5) hoap ch. good) but disappointing in two starts since and likely to struggle in this class. Tection Mittl: Former top hunter-chase. Well weighted when career-best effort when landing Hennessy Gold Cup (Newbury 3m.2) hoap ch. good to soft) last month, leading 3 out to beet Eudipe 15 lengths. Still on the upgrade, but plenty to find in this grade.

VERDICT: With Super Tactics likely to ease the burden of pacernaking, IMPERIAL CALL has the opportunity to underline his return to the top flight. He ran a high-class field ragged over 2m41 at Punchestown and his bold jumping could induce errors from main rival See More Business, while running the finish out of Simply Dashing. It would be foolish to underestimate Teeton MRB, but it is a giant leap from 10st 5lb in the Hen-

2.55 NETWORK PERSONNEL NOVICE CHASE C4

wee, black seams yellow, black fronces, yellow steeves, black seams
yellow, black fronces, yellow steeves, black seams
- 5 declared BETTING: 1-2 Dines, 4-1 Distant Echo, 8-1 Soloman, 10-1 Eagles Rest, 20-1 Flying Eagle
1997: Kadastrof 7 11 8 A Thomson 9-4 (R Dictin) 5 ran FORM GUIDE

Dines: Proved himself among top novices when making all to beet Dawn Leader 11/.
lengths at Sandown (2m novice, good). Game and mostly jumps well. The one to beat
Distant Eichte: Improved to beat Relicander at Chepstow (2m, good to soft) at Chepstow last month, but unsuited by soft when disappointing 21 lengths 3rd of 6 to Napper Reed at Uttoxeter (2m novice) last week Probably open to improvement
Eegles Reat: Bumper winner and smart novice hundler 2 seasons ago. Built for chasting and from in-form yard with strong novice hand. Leading contender despite lay-off
Plying Eegler Useful 2m handicap hundler last term, but much improved on Flat this
year, winning 6 times. Yet to race over fences but yard has form line with Nipper Reed
Soloman: Towcester novice hundle winner last term, thatking chasing debut either promising efforts over timber this term, Looks the part and from yard with good them ines
VERDICCT: DINES looked less than the finished article when appropriate a very strong VERDICT: DINES looked less than the finished article when scoring in a very strong field at Sandown, but he lacks nothing in courage and his experience could be telling tacks. Both Eagles Rest and Soloman promise to make their mark over fences, but this as a bugh course for newcomers.

3.25 PERTEMPS CATERING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m 110yds Penalty Value £6,840

num weight: 10st. True handicap wespht: Be My Mot 8st 13b, Migro's Lew 8st 13b. 11MG: 2-1 Papo Kharlama, 5-2 Meiody Mald. 5-1 Be My Mot. 7-1 Sutawesi, 8-1 Ivor's Flutter

BETTING: 2-1 Pape Kharisma, 5-2 Mesody Mald. 3-1 Be My Mot. 10-1 Dangden, 25-1 Major's Law 1997: Halle Dening 7 10 3 C Llewellyn 8-1 (N Tenston-Danes) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

Deraydan: Three-time winner last term but looked non-stayer when bin distance into 4th in this race last year. Faded before last when 22 lengths 7th of 11 to Brave Tornado at Cheltenham (3m hosp hole, good to soft) lest time. Papo Khamismas improving every outing and led before last to bit Toby Brown 11/s lengths with Melody Mald 3 lengths farther away 3rd at 8 sandown (2mid hosp hole, good) tatest. Open to more improvement. Likely to go to Wincarton 2.35 Norre Plutter: Tricky customer but useful on his day, with wins at Windsor and Ascot last term. Looked exposed on this mark when 7 lengths 3rd to Buckhouse Boy at Wincarton 12 months and and ran moderately efferwants.

Last term. Looked expected in the crisis which is a right and a businesses by a re-cention it months ago and ran moderately efferwards.

Metody Meted Improved this term with 3rd to Lady Rebecca at Chettenham and 4 lengths 3rd Pepo Kharisma at Sandown 2m 8t heap hote, good) Closely weighted with Papo Kharisma at Sandown 2m 8t heap hote, good) Closely weighted with Papo Kharisma but likely to do better under more patient ride.

Sulawest: Namow winner from Coh Shoi Noh over C/D from 4to higher last month but suited when taked off 9th of 11 to Papo Kharisme at Sandown (2m6) heap hole, good) adest and not one to trust

states and not one to trust

Be My Mot: Had Sulewesi 2 lengths back 3rd when wirning over G/D in Nov. but 9to
worse off now. Looks exposed after 2nd to Dashing Dollar at Windsor (2m6t, good)

Major's Law: Winner at Bangor, Stratford and Lecester last term (latest by 20 lengths
from 21th lower). Fit from AW Plat, Dut plently to do from 15th out of weights VERDICT: With Page Khartama Raty to head for Wincanton, the way could be open

VERLINE I: With Pape Kharisma away to head for Wincarton, the way could be open for MELIODY MAID to get to book on the winning trail. She appeared to get in front far too soon at Sandown, but looks expable of winning off this mark. A skintly-nun rece-might let Darayden into the chake-up, but the major threat could be liver's Flutter, who runs well here on the Flat and is the sort to go well fresh.

LEOPARDSTOWN

DENNY GOLD MEDAL NOVICE CHASE (Grade 1) £40,000 added 2m 1f Penaity Value £26,000 (D Lloyd) M Mores 5 11 4 _ _ _ .

9 declared - SETTING: 5-2 Hb Song, 7-2 Promatee, 4-1 Lanturn, 5-1 Feathered Leader, 7-1 Native Estates 12-1 Micko's Onsam, Finnegae's Hollow, 20-1 others 1397 Dardin 7 11 6 K P Gaule 10-3 (N Meade) 9 ran

FORM GUIDE

FORM GUIDE

Micke's Dream: Followed 20-length win over Torvill at Thurles (2n/2f, heavy) with smilar success over previous winner Well at Navari (2n/6f, heavy). Shorter trip a worry
Promater: Stamped himself leading novice chaser with wins at Listowel, Nasa and Faryhouse
(2n/4f, good to soft), beeing Fourtepel King (rec 85t) comfortable 3 lengths on latest start.
Good jumper who should not be bothered by drop in trip
Amberteligh House: Has not progressed from win over Lady Dalay at Gowran Park and looke
held by His Song on Purchestown nursing behind Gufterdge
Bahac: On the upgrade, but staking a big step up in class after, led last, beat Livin Joy 11/1
lengths at Commel (2nriff nov ch, soft). Plantly to find
Feethered Laeder: Backed to reverse it lengths Whas defeat on 2th worse terms at Faryhouse (2nriff pool to soft), but only 4 lengths 4th after mistakes. Shorter trip against him
Finnegan's Hollow: Promise in novice chases last Auturn (12 lengths 3rd to Beverd Jet at
Cork, 2n soft) but quickly returned to hundles. Difficult to assess after lay-off
Landure: Improving last and Impressive 20-length winner from Notcomplainingbut at Nasa (2m0),
soft) after nock defeat by Promatele (gave 7th) over 2m on same course
Neithe Estates: Encouraging chase debut when bit 8 lengths by Pinca Fil at Navan (2m4) nov
ch, soft). Trip should suit but held by Lantum through Notcomplainingbut
His Song inish Champion Hurde 2nd last term and easy winner of first two races over fences.
Out of sorts when bits shi-hid by Gutteridge at Punchestown (2m4, nov ch, heavy) laites!

VEERDICT! With the cuestion mark over His Song after Punchestown, it may only lerte with

VERDICT: With the question mark over His Song after Punchesiown, it may pay to side with

PROMALEE, who appeared to have something in reserve at Fairyhouse and might just have the edge on Lantum, who could find the trip on the sharp side.

DOUBLE ENGAGEMENTS

The following horses are doubly declared. They will take up their sec and preference only if the first is abandoned:

First preference

avesaksa Balmoral Princess Caracol Ecliptic Moon iome Counties lvor's Flutter Kind Prince Welody Maid Miss Pennyhill Papo Kharisma Solo Gent

Straffan Gold

Super Ritchart

The Ned

Total Joy

Newton Abbot 400 Market Rasen12.30 Hereford 3.40 Market Rasen 135 Market Rasen 3.05 Market Rasen 100 Newton Abbot 3.30 Avr 3.40 Kempton 3.25 Wetherby 1245 Kempton 3.25 Market Rasen 235 Wincanton 235 Newton Abbot 1.20 Sedgefield 200 Market Rasen 205 Wetherby 12.45 Hereford 1.30

Market Rasen 1.00

Newton Abbot 330

Wincanton 3.35 Huntingdon 3.30 Hereford 240 Wetherby 115 Huntingdon 200 Hereford 3:10 Market Rasen 135 Wincanton 235 Huntingdon 200 Huntingdon 130 Hereford 130 Kempton 3.25 Huntingtion 300 Market Rasen 235

Huntingdon 2.30 Huntingdon 2.00 Newton Abbot 330 Huntingdon 100

FIRST

49

S. E.

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C man

Newton Abbot off

NEWTON ABBOT, one of the 10 Boxing Day meetings scheduled for today, has fallen victim to the weather.

Officials at the Devon course inspected the track yesterday morning and decided that racing today would not be possible.

The clerk of the course, Michael Trickey, said: "The course is waterlogged and there is more rain forecast. It's a real shame as we had a good card - and this is the fourth year in succession that this has happened."

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	'¥THE IND	EPEN	DENT
	RACING	SERV	/ICFS
		26 1	
1	LIVE COMMEN	TARIES	PESULTS
1	KEMPTON	971	981
	WETHERBY	972	982
1	WINCANTON	973	983
1	AYR	974	984
1	HUNTINGDON	975	985
	HEREFORD	976	980
l	MARKET RASEN	970	980
	NEWTON ABBOT	970	980
ı	SEDGEFIELD	970	980
	WOLVERHAMPTON		980
1	0891 2		
П	Calls rose the new minutes		<u> </u>

Cells, com 50p per tainair. LLS, Sid, Scration St 6(2)4 49)

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MILLOWY CO.

One Man

PUNTERS' GUIDE

Teeton on brink of leap to the top

The former top jump jockey Steve Smith Eccles analyses today's King George VI Chase



ries the hopes of Martin Pipe's powerful yard in the absence of stable-companion Cyfor Malta. This quirky character was second to See More Business last year and will be well suited by this tight three miles - especially if he is ridden up with the pace.

Coome Hill: Gave his jockey, Jamie Osborne, a fairytale comeback win at Ascot - but I cannot see this sure-footed jumper matching strides with the market leaders when the race gets serious.

Escartefigue: Hard to fancy now that Adrian Maguire has abandoned him in favour of his stable companion Mulli-

imperial Call: The 1996 Gold Cup winner has been plagued with problems but has been rejuvenated by his new trainer, Raymond Hurley. Mick Fitzgerald has landed a plum ride and should be in the first three.

Mulligan: Formerly a highclass two-miler, Mulligan lost his way last term but ran a cracker in the Tripleprint Gold Cup last time. That form could be better than many give it credit for and he could run the race of his life.

See More Business: His connections have been praying for rain and it could be a case of divine intervention. However, last year's winner may need more than the ground in his favour as he attempts to

Challenger Du Luc: Car- emulate former back-to-back King George winners Desert Orchid, The Fellow and One

> Simply Dashing: Ran another cracker when the headgear was fitted for the Tripleprint Gold Cup. The bridesmaid in two big chases this season but will be well suited by this longer trip and has to be respected.

Super Tactics: His jockey, Andrew Thornton, who won this race on See More Business last year, thinks the world of this fellow, who is a sure-footed jumper. However, age is not on his side and younger rivals will leave him tapped for toe.

Teeton Mill: Greys have a fine record in this race and this progressive nine-yearold should take the step up from handicap company in his huge stride. Venetia Williams will be responsible for the training performance of the year if the former point-topointer succeeds.

Conclusion: The favourite, See More Business, has disappointed me and does not look up to the task, even if the ground comes up soft. TEE-TON MILL pulverised the opposition in the Hennessv Gold Cup to win by 15 lengths and looks a much safer proposition. I expect Simply Dashing and the Irish challenger, Imperial Call, to be snapping at his heels all the way to the line.

KEMPTON

12.40: The former French middle-distance Flat performer LAWAHIK faces no easy task conceding 5lb to the year-older Uttoxeter scorer Jungli, but he landed a touch in such convincing style on his hurdles debut at Haydock that he is likely to be worth following.

1.7

1.10: The powerful EXECU-TIVE KING is finding his ing back-straight fences. feet over fences and scarcely put a foot wrong when romping clear of a useful field at Lingfield. Geoff Hubbard's front-runner has an ideal partner in Tony McCoy and the pair could expose the flaws revealed in Spendid's jumping at Chelham.

1.45: Trutchev has been effortless Cheltenham win odds about. There could be better value in DECOU-PAGE, who maintained his progress with an improved second to Wahiba Sands at Newbury and has seen that form boosted by Lady Rebecca's easy Cheltenham success. This tighter course looks just what he needs.

ا محدث

2.20: IMPERIAL CALL showed himself a class act by completing a Naas/Punchestown double over distances ably improving faster than well short of his best. But it his leading rivals. Pat Hughwas in narrowly failing to es is convinced he has a Fesconcede 28lb to the smart tival candidate on his hands.

HYPERION'S

TV TIPS

Anabatic over 3m at Cork that the 1996 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner confirmed his return to the top bracket. He is a fine sight in full flow and capable of taking lengths out of the erratic See More Teeton Mill is the unknown quantity, but this is a new ball game for the Hennessy Gold Cup winner who could easily be rushed out of his usual steady early stride.

2.55: Josh Gifford recently described SOLOMAN as his "new Deep Sensation". Let's hope the Findon handler is still singing this handsome dealt a hefty 11lb rise for his prospect's praises after this tough chasing debut. Gifford and is not one to take short should know where he stands after Kurakka's win at Ascot on Saturday.

LEOPARDSTOWN

2.40: The Irish should have a fair guide to their Cheltenham novice chase prospects after the cream of their crop have pitted their talents here. His Song, Promalee and Feathered Leader all look exciting, but LANTURN turned in an exhilarating round of jumping to score at Naas and is prob-

Fale of the favourites:	1	1	_1_	3_	_1_	3	<u> </u>	_1_	1	4/5
Winner's place in bettin	g= 1	1	1_	0	1	2J	0	_1_	1	0
Starting-prices:	1-2	4-6	9-4	10-1	ev	9-2	16-1	11-4	8-13	10-1
Jimpers' ages:	9	10	11_	6	7_	7	6_	8_	8	7
Profit or loss to £1 stak	e: Far	vourii	es +!	£3.78	Sec	and F	avour	tes -	08.25	
Percentage of winners										
Shortest-priced winner.	Dese	rt Ott	hd (1	988) 1	-2					
Longest-priced winner:	Algan	(1994) 16-1							
Top treiners: F Dournen - The Fellow (1991 & 1992), Algan (1994) D Bisworth - Desert Orchid (1998, 1999 & 1990)										
Top jockey: R Durwoody - Desert Orchid (1988 & 1989), One Man (1995 & 1996)										

10-YEAR-TALE ON THE KING GEORGE

1988 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97

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	FIRST	S	НΟ	ľ

Ken	npt	on	1.4	5	
	C	н	L	S	_1
Telicher	7-4	64	15-8	19-8	7-
Decoupage	5-1	11-2	5-1	5-1	9
Serena	71-2	11-2	5-1	11-2	8
Road Racer	7-1	B-1	6-1	7-1	8
Kinnascaeh	14-1	14-1	12-1	14-1	14
Next Feet	14-1	12-1	14-1	12-1	2.
Runessey Renegati	b 11-1	20-1	10-1	14-1	14
King Of Thiores	14-1	15-1	20-1	16-1	ь
Shakayar	14-1	20-1	14-1	20-1	6
Balladur	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1	8
Capita Engle	20-1	20-1	26-1	20-1	20-
DiaWoold	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-
	- marker th		Alers	912	3

Rempton 2.20					
	C	H	L	S	7
See More Rosine	os 5-2	5-2	5-2	52	5-2
Theton MEI	11-4	11-4	3-1	11-4	11-4
imperial Call	41	41	41	41	9-2
Simply Dashing	11-2	51	92	5-1	5-1
Excarteliges	7-1	62	B-1	8-1	B-1
Charlenges du La	c 14-1	24	2:1	2 -1	18-1
Super Tectics	16-1	20-1	20-1	16 -1	16-1
Coome HE	25-1	25-1	25-1	25- 1	25-1
Ni-Niger	33-1	33-1	25-1	33-1	33-1
Each way, a 6th the outs, places 1, 2, 3					
C Const. H William	HE LL	adroi	# .58	arley,	T Tible

New career beckons for Cigar

THE SECOND most famous cigar in America, the racehorse of that name, could soon be back on the track, but not to

The highest-earning thoroughbred of all time proved to be infertile when he retired from racing to the Ashford Stud in Kentucky last year. However, his owner, Allen Paulson, is now close to an agreement with the insurers holding Cigar's \$25m fertility policy that may release him to Paulson's care.

Despite his inability to sire any offspring, let alone one that could come within a furiong of matching his own ability, Cigar, winner of the 1995 Breed-ers' Cup Classic and 1996 Dubai World Cup, remains a favourite with his owner and with the American public.

His rehabilitation would involve spending a restful retirement from both course and covering shed at his owner's Brookside Farm in Kentucky. Cigar could, however, embark on the celebrity circuit, making guest appearances at racetracks across the United

"Every race track I go to people ask me when we're going to get Cigar back," Paulson said. "We've got some big paddocks waiting for him."

Cigar would also spend part of the year at the Kentucky Horse Park - a rest home for celebrity racehorses - alongside Forego and John Henry, both track champions but both denied a career at stud by the surgeon's scalpel before their ability was recognised. Hong Kong, meanwhile,

foundation of racing in Hong Kong. At home they raced up to 30 miles in a straight line but of a conventional circuit.

son - in a schooling accident on Wednesday morning and faces another spell on the sidelines. Callaghan was due to ride at Market Rasen today,

could soon be used as a model for racing in Mongolia. The President of the province, Natsagiin Bagabandi, recently led a 90-strong delegation to Sha Tin racecourse, where he toured the grandstands and stables and watched the horses working. Mongol horses were the

soon adapted to the demands Eddie Callaghan will miss the holiday racing programme after his injury jinx struck again. He broke his collar-bone - for the second time this sea-



Allen Paulson (right) with Cigar after his 1996 Dubai World Cup win Sporting Life

HEREFORD

HYPERION

12.25 Forever Noble 12.55 Racing Hawk 1.30 Hisar 2.05 Selberry 2.40 Distant Storm 3.10 Stepasideboy 3.40 Rocabee

GOING: Good ■ Right-hand course with 300vd run-in. ■ Course & N of city on A48 Hereford station Im. ADMISSION: Cut) €13. Tattersalls €10. Course Enclosure £5. Accompanied under-16s free all enclosures. CAR PARK: Free

M LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 37-1(3 (359%), N Twiston-Davier III LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 32-106 (30.2%), C Liewell 23-99 (23.2%), C Maude 11-43 (25.6%), R Dunwoody 11-44 (25%), IN FAVOURITES: 206 wins in 522 races (395%). BLANKERED PRIST TIME: Arctic Fusilier (1225), Shirley Venture (240).

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

12.25 GOOSE NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,500 added 2m 3f 110yds

			to,out added zill ol i luyus
	1		FOREVER NOBLE (14) O Sherwood 5 tt 5 _ J A MicCar
	2	73-12	HOMME DE FER (62) (D) (BF) K Baley 6 11 5
ı	3	20/354	ARCTIC FUSILIER (22) N Twistor-Davies 7 to 12 . T Jank
1	4	02	DANDONELL (21) S Griffins 4 to 12 D O'Driscoil
	5	0-	DASHARAN (378) I Williams 5 10 12
	6	0-	EATON DOVE (266) C J Price 5 to 12 L Corcoran
1	7	2/	GREYCOAT BOY (910) (BF) J king 6 to 12 L Cummins
ı	В		MOBAYE (FR) (26) J Navige 4 10 12 Her
	9		MY LEGAL EAGLE (11) E Beyon 4 10 12 O McPhall
	10		TELUK (410) Mrs J Priman 7 10 12 D Les
	n	400	TOMBAY TICKLE (31) C M Price 6 10 12Guy Lewis
	12	4PUU1-	WINTER GAME (209) H Day 5 10 12
i	13		WORM WATCHER P Ford B 10 12 Mar M Fritin
	74		CRACKING CRUMPET R Brotherton 7 to 7 . R Studitolete
	Б	23-3P3	GLACIAL MISSILE (29) P Bowen 5 to 7 W Mars
	16	0/46-	SELECTIVE ROSE (235) J Smith 7 10 7 V State

- 16 declared BETTING: 7-2 Forever Noble, 9.2 Homme De Fer, 11-2 Arctic Fusilier,
7-1 Winter Game, 8-1 Dendonati, Glacial Missile, 12-1 Greycoat Boy, My
Legal Engle, 14-1 Selective Rose, 16-1 others

12.55 MINCE PIE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (G) \$2,500 added 3m 2f

450ff RACING HAWK (F132) P Boxen 6 (2.9 W Marston B 6116P5 WEATHER WISE (47) (CD) W G M Turner 6 11 17 . S Wymne P2F000 DADDY'S POLLY (11) B Liewellyn 4 11 3 Miss E J Jones 0-0001 HEAD GARDENER (21) R Lee 4 to 10 Mr P Costello (7) B /2-0P5 COSY RIDE (16) N Twiston-Davies 6 10 7 T Junits B 0/6P6 RIVER MULLIGAN (21) N Hawke 6 10 4 J A McCarthy P32231 BALMORAL PRINCESS (16) D McCan 5 10 3 2nd Preference 060335 WESTERN CHIEF (9) D Williams 4 10 2 . . Mr R Forrissel (7) 6-P50 FASTINI GOLD (11) R J Proce 6 10 0 O McPhail (5) 10 PF-46P JUST FOR A REASON (59) A Juckes 6 10 0 . Guy Lends (3) V 251-6U NEW ROSS (15) O (7Neil 6 10 0 12 00-POU SPENCER STALLONE (16) Graette Roe 5 10 0 R Massey 1 - 12 declared -

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Just For A Reason 9st 4lb. New Ross, Spencer Stallane 9st 1lb BETTING: 15-6 Racing Hamit, 6-1 Weather Wise, Head Gardener, Bal-moral Princesa, 8-1 Western Chief, Fastini Gold, 12-1 others

1.30 BOXING DAY NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 3f P14411 INFLUENCE PEDLER (ZZ) (CD) Mss N George 5 (2 0 . R Mansay

2-53P2 HISAR (16) P Roctions 5 Ti 6 S Fox 2/5-P BURLINGTON SAM (NZ) (16) (D) A Hobbs 10 10 13 L Harvey -6/23U COME ON PENNY (11) D Gandolfo 7 t0 12. _ . . S Wynne P2P-30 MELCROFT REGATTA (49) R Alner 6 to to ... W Marston 43-5U1 MEASURED STEP (21) (D) J King 7 to 9 . . . L Cummins (3) 40P-P2 ROSSELL ISLAND (21) Mrs J Firmen 7 10 5 D Lealny 11 3P-52P HELLO ME MAN (39) B Liewellyn 10 10 2 O McPhall (5) 12 3320F3 SUPER RITCHART (86) B Paling 10 10 0 X Alzport (5) 13 declared -

Minimum weight, 10st, True handicap weights: Super Ritchert 9st 12th, One BETTING: 4-1 Influence Pedier, 9-2 Sissinghurst Piyer, 5-1 Histor, 8-1 Conte On Penny, Super Ritchart, 10-1 Monicasman, Measured Step, 12-1 others 2.05 TURKEY NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE

L		☐ (CLASS E) £3,500 added 2m 1f
1	PP-304	GO SRITANNIA (14) F Jordan 5 Tt 10 L Corcoran (7)
2	035/0	FAIRY KNIGHT (11) & Bairy 6 tl 9 July R Fornistal (7)
3		DARIEN (21) R Dake 4 11 7
4	623-0P	WALK ON BY (23) J King 4 Ti 4 L Cummins (3)
5	6-501t	SELBERRY (16) (D) E L James 4 Ti 1 J A McCarthy
6	0-P0	FORESTRY (18) M Warson 4 to 10
7	330526	ZORBA (79) J OSnea 4 10 9 V Slattery V
8	530-00	! RECALL (23) P Hayward 7 to 3 Goy Lends (3) V
9	P4400-	MARKET MAYHEM (393) C Jackson 8 t0 8 . Miss S Jackson
1	0343-0	DIGITAL OPTION (37) 1 Spearing 4 to 7 Miss T Spearing
71	6:0P0-	TONGUE-IN-CHEEK (245) D Firench Davis, 7 to 5 - R Massey
1	000-5	EIN TRESOR (16) 8 Liewellyn 4 th 5 Mass E J Jones
t		VENDOON (371) P Easen 8 T 3 W Marston
и		BE IN SPACE (220) P Ford 7 t0 2 S Wynne
ŧ	/P-454	DRANGE PLACE (11) B Liewelyn 7 t0 1 O McPhail (5)
t	56-0	POKER SCHOOL (23) M R Ecsey 4 10 0 X Alzpuru (3)
		40 de de de

Movimum weight: 10st True handscap weight: Polier School Set 13tb. BETTING: 7-4 Selberry, 9-2 Danien, 8-1 Go Britannia, Zorba, 10-1 Be In Space, 12-1 Fairy Knight, Walk On By, Digital Option, 14-7 others

2.40 HUGHES CATERERS HANDICAP HURDLE (F) £5,000 2m 3f 110yds

3.10 PLUM PUDDING NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3m 1f 110yds - 14 declared - 14 declared - 15 12 Mr R Fornistal (7) - 14 declared - 15 15 Espasibleboy, 9-2 Shore Party, 5-1 High In The Clouds, Spring Saint, 6-1 Holdmotose, 8-1 Alston Antics, 14-1 Claymore Lad, Drum Battle, 18-1 others

3.40 SHEPHERDS MEADOW OPEN NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,500 2m 1f UFFP1- GRAYROSE FLEUR (224) (D) A Bailey 5 TI 2 ... S Wynne B-43 BOOT'S MATE (55) J Neville 6 Ti 0 Miss P Jones DOLES EMPEROR W G M Turner 4 Ti 0 J Power (7) FOREST FRIEND A J Wisson 4 Ti 0 L Cummins (3) GRANDPA MAURICE R Beller 4 TI 0 G Shenkin (5) 4 JACDOR (28) R Dickin 4 11 0. X Aizpuru 0 LAMBRINI KNIIGHT (35) Mrs L Williamson 5 Ti 0 LISTE ROUGE R Ainer 5 to 0 Mark Smith (7)

BETTING: 5-4 Rocabee, 11-2 Grayrose Fieur, 13-2 Boot's Mate, 7-1 Jac-dor, 8-1 Nokimover, 18-1 Liste Rouge, Wicked Game, 25-1 others

SEDGEFIELD

1.00 Mr Mahdio 1.30 Queensway 2.00 Another Venture 2.30 Xaipete 3,00 Cathedral Belle

■ Course is 1m SE of town near junction of A689 and A177. Bue service from Stockton station (9m) or Durham station (12m).

ADMISSION: Paddock £8 (OAPs £4); Course £2. CAR PARK:
Paddock £2, others tree.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

I LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 62-243 (255%), G M
Moore 19-114 (16.7%), J H Johnson 18-159 (11.3%), B Ellison 17117 (145%).

II LEADING JOCKEYS: P Niven 44-171 (25.7%), G Lee 19-91
(205%), L Wyer 15-105 (14.3%), R Supple 14-100 (14%).

III FAVOURITES: 216 wire in 581 races (37.2%)
BLINKERED FRIST TIME: The Snow Burn (130), Zacopani (300), Durano (330).

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1	5P.PP	BEFINE'S STAR (85) N Bycrott 4 10 12
2	0-POP	BUCKS GALA (11) D Lamb 6 10 12
3		CASTLE STEPHEN (321) C Grant 7 to 12 Supple
4		COPPEEN JEWEL (37) J J O'Neil 5 10 12 R McGrath B
5	6/DUPO	DOM/INDROSS (11) D Smith 6 10 12
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	_				
	6		DONNEGALE (37) T		
	7	P1-033	FLIGHTY LEADER ((ii) Liungo 6 10 12	W Dowling (5)
	8		LEG BEFORUM (11)		
	9		MR MAHDLO (28) R		
	10	D1-162	BECCA'S ROSE (12)	FML phy 6 10 7	Jardine (7)
	T	P5460	DOUBLE BUCK (11)	W Kemp 6 10 7	N Horrocks (5)
	12		JOWOODY (56) Mrs		
	13	P/0U-	LOTHIAN LILY (257)	Mrs JBarr 9107	N Sznáth
	14	002-00	OUR CAROL (12) FI	Wauntagh 8 107	Mr D Jewett (7)
	15	603-04	SUPREME SPICE (1	1) F Murphy 5 10 7	T Hogg (7)
			46	dantami _	

- 15 declared -BETTING: 3-1 Flighty Leader, 7-2 Jowoody, 9-2 Mr Mahdio, 5-1 Bacca's Rosa. Donnacsie, 8-1 Coppeen Jewel, 14-1 Supreme Spice, 50-1 others

1.30 DURHAM INNS NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 5f

- 5 declared -8ETTING: 2-1 Queensway, 5-2 Queens Brigade, 7-2 The Snow Burn, 4-1 Joridi La Forige, 14-1 Made Of Steel, 33-1 Red Hot Prince

KEN BRIGHT STILL GOING AFTER ALL 2.00 KEN BRIGHT STILL GOING AT THESE YEARS HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £6,000 added 3m 3f

664-0P ANOTHER RED (10) (C) W Res 10 11 7 _____ N Horrocks (S) -F34-0D D'ARBLAY STREET (29) (CD) W Kemp 9 71 5 ___ D Berdley B 4U-345 MISTER MUDDYPAWS (10) J H Johnson 8 11 5 ____ M Foster 32-300 GERMAN LEGEND (24) D Lamb 8 11 3 _____ J Burdles 34-133 POLO PONY (32) (CD) J Upson 6 10 10 _____ J Supple - s concerno -BETTING: 7-4 Siters Stellier, 3-1 Polo Pony, 5-1 Another Venture, 7-1 Mis-ter Muddypaws, 10-1 D'Arblay Street, 14-1 Johns The Boy, 16-1 German Legend, 20-1 others

RENT ROLL CUP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £5,000 added 2m 110yds

3.00 UNION HALL SIENA STUD HANDICAP HURDLE (E) £3,500 2m 5f 110yds

2440 CATCH THE PIGEON (35) (CD) R Berr 9 10 4 ... Smith Color State (CD) R Berr 9 10 4 ... Supple PP431 BOSTON MAN (30) (D) R Woodhouse 7 10 0 ... Mr E Babington (7)

Minimum weight; 10st. True handkap weight: Boston Man 9st 9th BETTING:3-1 Cethedral Bellis, 7-2 Andy's Lad, 6-1 Boston Man, 8-1 Mike Stan, Lucky Master, 10-1 Jack Robbo, Northern Meestro, 12-1 others

3.30 BRIAN ELLISON RACING CLUB HANDICAP HURDLE (E) £3,500 2m 1f

HUNTINGDON

1.00 Bali Strong 1.30 Double Tempo 2.00 Castle Owen 2.30 Garrison Friendly 3.00 Oscail An Doras 3.30 Brea Hill

GOING: Good to Soft (Soft in places). ■ Right-hand, level course. Run-in 200yds. ■ Course is at junction of A1 and A804 Huntingdon station (service from London, King's Cross) tm. ADMISSION: Members £13; Paddock £10; Course £5. CAR PARK: Free.

FTVE-YEAR STATISTICS

LEADING TRAINERS: K Bailey 18-81 (222%), G Hubbard 16-72 (22.2%) Mrs M Reveley 14-37 (27.5%), J Gifford 14-73 (9.2%), III LEADING JOCKEYS: R Durwoody 21-81 (25.9%), M A Fitzgerald 17-86 (9.9%), P Hide 15-64 (23.4%), N Willemson 14-73 (9.2%), B FAVOURITES: 227-517 (43.9%), BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Woodhouse Bay (1.00), Mister Gen-

1.00 FESTIVE SPIRIT 'NH' NOVICE HUR-DLE (CLASS E) £2,900 added 3m 2f

BETTING: 190-50 Young Thruster, 9-2 The Writer, 5-1 Ball Strong, 11-2 Supreme Day, 6-1 Bold Leap, 8-1 Mud in Your Ear, 10-1 Renardina Boy, 14-1 others

1.30 CHRISTMAS TIDE NOVICE CHASE (E) £4,000 added 2m 4f 110yds | 100-P CAPTAIN MORRIS (50) P Wegmann 8 10 12 ... D Matthews 0-1 DOUBLE TEMPO (33) (0) C Egartor 7 10 2 ... JR Keneragh P-1- FREE TO ROAM (237) K Baley 6 10 12 ... R Walding 6 500:00 GAYASKAR (17) Mas S Baxter 9 10 12 ... Gary Lyons 5 PUPPE LORD LOFTY (33) JR Best 8 10 12 ... De Forti (3) 6 PUPPE LORD LOFTY (33) JR Best 8 10 12 ... De Forti (3) 6 PUPPE LORD LOFTY (33) JR Best 8 10 12 ... M Richards 6 50 22 ... J Goldstein (5) 8 124-30 SPECIALIZE (35) N (Bastes 6 10 12 ... JR Grittins (5) 10 11/45 TOTAL JOY (10) (0) C Mann 7 10 12 ... 2nd Preference 11 5-2222 WINSSORD (HLL (16) (0) I Williams 7 10 12 ... JA Apptil 12 645-34 MISS PENNYHLL (14) A Sadis 5 10 7 ... 2nd Preference 12 declared -

- 12 declared -BETTING: 7-2 Double Tarapo, Symphony's Son, 5-1 Winstord HE, Free To Rosm, 7-1 Mr Bojungles, Purple Ace, 10-1 Specializa, 18-7 others

2.00 CHRISTMAS BOX HANDICAP HUR-DLE (F) \$2,400 added 2m 5f 110yds 2/84.2 BURN OUT (48) J GHord 6 12 0 L Aspell 3435-1 CASTLE OWEN (18) (7) D Nobloon 8 11 3 L Thomton 527-35 KING GRISEACH (14) (7) Was 5 Baute 9 11 9 Carry Lyons 482P BESSIE BROWNE (273) (CO) G Hubbard 6 11 5C Honton (7)

8245- WHAT JIM WANTS (217) P Wegmann 5 10 11 ... D Matthews 414-3 RET FREM (18) A H Harvey 5 10 11 ... M Berry 5064/ BLAZING STORM (666) C Egertan 5 10 9 ... Sophie Matheill 3/2/50 KIND PRINCE (21) M Bebry 6 10 8 2nd Preferente 0 6892 STONE RIDGE (11) J Pearce 6 10 6 J R Kriversell 4 M Dishelegit 16 12PP-0 MESTER GENERIOSITY (33) (D) C Weedon 7 10 0 7 14U4-U TOMMIY COOPER (42) (C) Mrs B Waring 7 10.0 E Byrns -17 declared - Meninute weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Staffan Gold 9st 12th, Meser Garrercoty 9st 12th, Tomeny Cooper Str 9th. EETTING: 5-2 Castle Owen, 8-1 Burn Out, Smaftan Gold, 8-1 Limit The Damage, Stone Ridge, 10-1 Ret Frem, 14-1 Gay Galani, 16-7 others

2.30 BEDFORD LODGE HOTEL HANDICAP CHASE (E) £4,000 added 3m PP-223 SWING QUARTET (80) (D) (BF) N Twiston-Davies 6 11 3 5 228-34 HIGH LEARE (18) (CD) A H Hervey 8 11 1 M Richerds 8 562-21 GARRISON FRIENDLY (33) (D) N Henderson 5 10 12 JR Kavenagh
7 4P/2P- DOLIKOS (374) (C) T Caldwell 11 10 12 _____ D Fort (3)
8 104-13 MAMICA (31) (D) M Dods 8 10 11 _____ R Thornson
9 5F-F0 ODELL (36) (C) K Baby 8 10 9 _____ R Whitley
10 12-213 BARDONCELL (16) (SF) M Wilderson 8 10 4 _____ L Aspell
11 F-SF01 RIOT LEADER (18) (CD) T George 8 10 0 ____ Gery Lyons
12 3/P/31 NORTH BANNISTER (22) (D) K Burle 11 10 0. M Griffiths (5)
12 declared -____ 12 declared -____ 12 declared -_____ 13 (CD) T George 8 10 0 ____ Gery Lyons
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19 (CD) T George 8 10 0 _________ Gery Lyons
19 (CD) T Gery Lyons Mammum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: North Bannister 9st 9th: BETTING: 9-4 Garrison Friendly, 4-1 Tonfts Tip, 5-1 Swing Queriet, 8-1 Solo Gent, Mamica, Flot Leader, 12-1 North Bannister, 14-1 others

3.00 BOXING DAY HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,250 added 2m 110yds 1 4-5294 CULANSO (23) (D) C Marth 6 12 2 2nd Preference
2 4-5023 MACHALINI (15) (BF) T George 5 11 10 2nd Preference
3 25/306 OSCAIL AN DORAS (24) (CD) F Murphy 9 11 5 25/306 OSCAIL AN DORAS (24) (CD) F Murphy 9 11 5 25/306 OSCAIL AN DORAS (24) (CD) F Murphy 9 11 5 2nd 2 2nd

-B declared -B declared -B declared Minimum weight: 10st. Two handicap weights: Whose Wonder 9st 13th, High-land Fame 8st 9th.
BETTING: 5-2 Machalini, 7-2 Oscall An Dorse, 9-2 Black Statement, 5-1 Guargo, 8-1 Salisong, Wixou Wonder, 10-1 Nocatchin, 14-2 Highland

3.30 MISTLETOE OPEN NH FLAT RACE (H) £1,500 added 2m 110yds 1/ BORO SOVEREIGN (818) (D) N Henderson 5 TI

BETTING: 3-1 Roller Black, 7-2 Bore Sovereign, 13-2 Molly Fitz Lad, Talkia, 8-1 Boot's Mate, 10-1 Brea Hill, Some Go West, Thanks Big Felia, What You Know, 16-1 others

MARKET RASEN

12.30 Panooras Lord 1.00 Copper Shell 1.35 Alzoomo 2.05 Young Kenny 2.35 Monicasman 3.05 Sweep Gently 3.35 Shannon

GOING: Chase course - Heavy (Good to Soft in back straight); hurdle course - Good to Soft (Soft places in straight).

Right-hand, sharp, undulating circuit. Run-in of one furlong.

Course is E of town on A631 Market Rasen station (Lincoln Grimsby Irrie J Irri. ADMISSION: Club £13; Tattersalis £9 (OAP Jublice Club half price); Silver Ring £5 (Jublice Club OAPs half

price). CAR PARK; picnic areas £2, remainder free FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS TYPE-TEAR 3 TATISTICS

LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 22-93 (23.7%), Mrs M Reveley 21-104 (20.2%), Mrs S Smith 15-104 (14.4%), Miss H Knight 13-41 (317%).

II LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 30-78 (38.5%). N Williamson 21-89 (23,6%), L Wyer 16-87 (18,4%), A S Smith 16-146

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Panooras Lord (visored, 12.30), Dunabrattin (visored, 100), Alzoomo (135); Charlie Hawes visored, 235), Sefton Blake (335), Slipstream (visored, 335).

12.30 MISTLETOE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (G) £2,000 2m 1f 110yds

1.00 GRANGE & LINKS HOTEL MAIDEN HURDLE (F) £2,600 2m 3f 110yds

10 065:3 SUMO (16) Mrs S Larryman 5 11 5 J Mages 11 30007 THE MD (1057) A Kelleway 7 11 5 J F Lastina 12 60 VELMEZ (23) A Mathew 5 11 5 R Wildmann (5) 13 02345 CRUZ SANTA (21) M Crepmen 5 11 0 W Worthington 14 LBY JACKUS (7588) Mrs A E Johnson 4 11 0 Mr V Coogen (7) 15 643 MISS LAMERTINI (286) D McCan 5 11 0 A C Coyle (5) - 15 declared -BETTING: 7-2 Springfield Scatty, 4-1 Famil, 7-1 Roddens, 15-2 Gay Galant, 9-1 Sumo, 10-1 Copper Shell, Dend Century, Impartio, 14-1 others

1.35 ROSELAND KILVINGTON HANDICAP HURDLE (D) £7,000 2m 3f 110yds 781 13%.
BETTING: 5-2 Night Dance, 3-1 Alzoomo, 7-2 Key Grip, 9-2 Jamescen Flight, 8-1 Ceracol, 12-1 Sheriffnest, 20-1 Home Counties, 50-1 Caption Toronto. 2.05 CLUGSTON LINCOLNSHIRE NATION-AL (HANDICAP CHASE) (CLASS C)

£12,500 added 4m 1f

— 11 declared — Minaming (r) — 11 declared — Minaming (r) — 11 declared — Minaming (r) — Minamin

2.35 BRUCE & JOE CARR NOVICE HAND-ICAP CHASE (E) £5,000 3m 1f

3.05 FESTIVE SEASON NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,500 added 2m 1f 110yds

3.35 HOLLY & THE IVY CONDITIONALS NOVICE CLAIMING HURDLE (G)

£2,000 added 2m 1f 110yds

Hill faces mission improbable

THE MISSION looks impossible but they have accepted it. Gloucester have to start winning away with regularity otherwise they will self destruct before the end of the season.

Abysmal does not begin to cover their record at the moment. Gloucester are suffering from a chronic bout of homesickness that has seen them win just three Allied Dunbar Premiership matches away from fortress Kingsholm since the start of last season - a total of 16 fixtures.

What is worse is they have to travel to Wasps tomorrow where their record in the league makes for even grimmer reading. Eight visits (shared between Sudbury and Loftus Road) and not a sin-

RUGBY UNION

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

A ninth defeat will set them alongside Harlequins for possession of the worst away record in the history of the league. No wonder Richard Hill, their diminutive director of and invariably cede all advanrugby, has had an anxious Christmas.

"Our away form is something we are addressing very seriously," said Hill, with a note of desperation in his voice. "We have to find a way around it and the end it is just an attitude of mind. If all 15 players have pitch it will be fine. Gloucester

table side if we don't win away from Kingsholm."

It is bizarre that Gloucester currently have a tendency to out-pick an in-form player." play their opponents for the first 40 minutes, then obligingly let the opposition back into the game tages and, ultimately, victory.

They have had their problems. Long-term injury to their talented England prop Phil Vickery threatens his career and there are a clutch of other indispositions. Also, as Hill adall our efforts are being poured mitted, the 26 players are still into finding a solution. But in trying to come to terms with the squad system. "It has been difficult for a player who, fitness total self-confidence on the permitting, has been first choice for two or three seasons

in just about every position I have the luxury of being able to

Mark Mapletoft is an example of that. He was ousted at flyhalf by Simon Mannix back in November but, after coming off the bench to score 13 points last week, he starts against Wasps. "Mark has found it hard," said Hill, "but I think he is a better player for it. The squad has to learn to replace the

verb 'dropped' with 'rested'." For all that, Hill admitted: "I can't say I am optimistic about the outcome of the Wasos match. But if they put in the sort managed against Leicester it pass 200 points for the season

earlier this season in the fourth minute of injury time and the players should be desperate to Newcastle last week. beat them for that reason as well as ending this away run." It is a big responsibility for lock Rob Fidler, who captains the side for the first time in a

Of the other Premiership games tomorrow Harlequins must fancy their chances against Sale, particularly since captain Zinzan Brooke is expected to have recovered from flu. His All Black colleague John Schuster is another reason why Quins are favourites. Schuster of gritty performance that they has become the first player to

Premiership match.

because I have quality players They beat us at Kingsholm look to David Rees, the England wing, to beef up their defence, which conceded five tries at for Dan Harris.

> 3.15pm – and will be giving the Argentine prop Roberto Grau and South Africa-born, England qualified centre Jeremy Thomson fitness tests. Both are rated

Today leaders Leicester line up against Bedford with an unchanged side from that which came away from Kingsholm with a satisfying win last week. That means no Joel Strausky, Will Greenwood or Nnamdi

are never going to be anything suddenly to find himself on the will be a start. We have every with a remarkable 69 successmore than a reasonable midbench," explained Hill. "But reason to want to beat Wasps. ful kicks out of 80. Sale could well Howard and bring in wing Ben Whetstone in his place, while centre Joe Ewens makes way

> In the other Boxing Day Saracens entertain strug- match Richmond are again gling London Scottish at Wat- without captain Ben Clarke, ford - a match that kicks off at who has a fractured cheekbone, when they take on London Irish at Reading, a fact which does not help their chances against a formidable Exiles team. Irish are again without back row dynamo Isaac Fea'unati (knee) but they are the form side and, having gone close at Sunbury, there is every chance, now that they have been bolstered by the arrival of the likes of halfbacks Steve Bachop and Kevin Putt, that

they will emerge victors.

BY ANDREW BALDOCK

STRUGGLING BATH have suffered a major setback with the resignation of Tony Swift as the club's non-executive chairman.

The former England wing, one of Bath's heroes during their glory years, has stepped down for family and business reasons. He was Bath's chief executive during one of the most turbulent times in the club's history when their former coach Brian Ashton and director of rugby John Hall left the club in quick succession two

years ago.

Bath are currently reeling from five successive Allied Dumbar Premiership defeats. their worst ever losing sequence, and Swift's departure will be viewed as a major loss both by players and supporters. Tony has decided that he needs to devote more time to his young family, as well as his business commitments," said the Bath general manager, Bob Calleja. "We respect his decision and would like to thank him for his past services. Tony has made it clear that he will continue to offer his total support to Andrew Brownsword, Andy Robinson and Bath Rugby."

Brownsword, the club's millionaire backer, will be anxious for an upturn in fortunes in the new year while coach Robinson must prepare his team for a make-or-break Tetley's Bitter Cup tie at Newcastle on 9 January. If Bath lose in the northeast it will almost certainly end their quest for domestic silverware with four months of the season remaining.

Leeds are almost certain to appeal against a four-point deduction for fielding the Australian rugby league player Wendell Sailor before his registration was accepted by Twickenham. The English Rugby Partnership are believed to have handed out the points deduction and although Leeds are yet to have received official notification they are likely to pursue the matter.

Leeds chief executive Gary Hetherington said: "If it's true that we've been deducted four points it's fairly likely that we would appeal. We feel we have a strong case. We did everything we could and all along

The Tykes have not lost a league match since Sailor's arrival in late October, but the points deduction would leave them in relegation trouble with-

out any hopes of promotion. The Brisbane Bronco, who is being forced to play as an amateur because the RFU refuse to accept his work permit, is due to fly back to Australia at the end of January. Meanwhile, Leeds have signed Jonathan Scales from rugby league side Bradford Bulls.

by the rest of the bay, was un-

printable, and in the true Christ-

mas spirit of giving, several

In fact Gould and England

more pies travelled his way.

had the last laugh, and he bril-

liantly caught Greg Chappell at cover point, a dismissal that was

crucial in helping England, in

spite of a heroic last wicket

stand between Border and Jeff

Thomson, to squeeze home by

three runs. Incredibly about

15,000 people turned up to

watch what could have been just

one ball's cricket on the final

morning. But then this is the op-

timistic nature of Australians.

When England lost to the West Indies in Trinidad last

February the team watched a

re-run of that match, partly for

something to do and partly for

inspiration. Whatever the per-

ceived wisdom of such exer-

cises, England won the next

Test - an achievement they

would give a lot to match over

the next few days.

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The Ireland international No 8 Eric Miller will return to Leicester next Tuesday when the Tigers entertain the Barbarians. Miller, who left Welford Road to join Terenure College in Dublin, will turn out in a team containing 11 full internationals. including Scotland's Craig Chalmers and Scott Hastings.

Ulster's game is put back

THE EUROPEAN Cup semifinal between Ulster and Stade Français has been put back to Saturday 9 January after the French club objected to playing

on the previous Friday night. The Stade Français president, Max Guazzini, faxed the tournament director, Roger Pickering, with a letter of complaint on Tuesday, saying that playing on Friday 8 January would prevent the match being shown on French television. Guazzini also claimed that the Ravenhill ground was too small to stage such a high-profile game, but Pickering allayed those fears by announcing that extra seating had been

"After protracted negotiations it has been decided to change the date and kick-off time of the European Cup semifinal between Ulster and Stade Français from 7.15pm on 8 January to 1pm the following day." Pickering said. The change of plan means that French rugby supporters can get a double dose of live rugby action with Colomiers meeting Perpignan in Toulouse in the other semi-final



Where beer and meat pies top the menu

IN MELBOURNE it is known simply as "The G". To the rest of us it is the world's largest cricket stadium, able to seat a massive 100,000 people, nearly half of them in the monolithic Southern stand. Playing cricket against Australia is always an experience in Melbourne, es-

four of them one-day matches, including the World Cup final against Pakistan in 1992. On that occasion a world record power alone. crowd of 90,000 turned up. though the intimidation aspect by sign language, was imposof playing in front of so many sible and most other senses (Lord's holds 27,000) was diluted without the presence of tional thought to be applied. Not Australia, who had aiready been knocked out.

This was not the case in 1983 when England played here in a World Series match. Even renowned for their love of

CRICKET

BY DEREK PRINGLE in Melbourne

though it was a rain-reduced match, 83,000 were present, the previous record before the World Cup final. The noise was pecially on Boxing Day, and it is terrifying and every time Allan one that stays with you for life. Border or John Dyson struck a England were due to experience boundary - which was often as it for themselves with the start the 15-over rule was in use here of the fourth Test this morning. even then - the sheer volume During my playing career I made your head feel as if it was about to burst. It is the modern equivalent of the Coliseum and great pockets of air felt as if they to extend one of the most sucwere being shifted by vocal

Communication, other than were too numbed to allow rasurprisingly, despite my managing to run Border out, Engare

Melbournians

sport. However, Boxing Day at As you would expect during vert back to full strength Test in 1982 one of them found the G is a tradition that embraces not only Melbourne, but also the rest of Australia and even beyond. Indeed, Aussies from as far away as Singapore and the Gulf have the action. Last year, against time ever, only light beer (less

MARK TAYLOR yesterday vowed

cessful stints by an Australian

cricket captain on next year's

tour to the West Indies. Taylor,

34, had previously only commit-

ted himself to the current Ashes

fourth Test against England, he

said he wanted to settle one

personal challenge in an ex-

Taylor is determined to rec-

But while preparing for the

series against England.

traordinary career.

As you would expect during vert back to full strength Test in 1982 one of them found other day." The reply chorused on the opening day is fairly con- and five. Even so the caterers he patrolled the boundary. spicuous, particularly over the

aside for a day at the cricket. This year precautions have

the West Indian pace battery of

Curily Ambrose, Courtney

Walsh and Ian Bishop. Taylor,

whose Test average is around

44, has a batting average of

28.11 against the West Indies in

20 Tests - his lowest against all

for a four-Test series starting

next March and Taylor said:

West Indies if the selectors

Australia tour the Caribbean

of the Test-playing countries.

expect to shift well over 250,000 Gould, who was England's 12th six or so hours normally set litres of the stuff, along with man and fielding in front of the 10,000 litres of Coke. Meat pies are also some-

to keep his cool. Turning to face flown back especially to take in been taken and, for the first thing of an institution at the his tormentor, and feeling hu-MCG and 20,000 are expected to mour was perhaps the best op-South Africa, 72,000 turned up, than three per cent alcohol) will have been shifted by stumps on tion, he said: "Steady on mate, despite the appalling weather be served, though this will rethe first day. During the same I only had me barnet done the Taylor to lead Australia in Caribbean

> ed those two things are maintained I will keep playing." Meanwhile, the former Australian Test player Dean Jones has said he will name an international cricketer who he claims helped organise an approach by illegal bookmakers on the 1992 tour of Sri Lanka. "I'm fairly sure I'll go to the Jones will tell a new Australian Cricket Board inquiry into bet-

with me as captain so provid-

information about team changes and pitch conditions. The cricketer is neither Sri Lankan or Australian, Jones said. He would not comment on whether it was Indian allrounder Manoj Prabhakar, about whom allegations have been made but who has consistently denied links with cricket's betting underworld.

tify a poor batting record against pick me. I'm still enjoying play- ting in the game the name of the the West Indian pace battery of ing and the side is playing well player who was with him when a bookmaker offered £25,000 for

then infamous Bay 13, managed



Brian Lara, on whose form the West Indies are reliant

Cronje warns against complacency

IN SOUTH Africa's ever-chang- BY TONY COZIER ing social and political landscape, Boxing Day has become the Day of Goodwill. However, the nation's cricketers have and Headingley. It was a rebeen cautioned not to take the new name too literally as they start the third Test match against the West Indies here

They are already 2-0 ahead in the series of five Tests and, with their opponents in obvious disarray, the prospects of an unprecedented 5-0 clean sweep have been repeatedly trumpeted in the media.

The South Africa captain, Hansie Cronje, and his players have reason to be more wary. England last summer, they

in Durban

which they lost at Trent Bridge versal that has served as a salutary warning.

They have five match-winners in their team who could turn any game around so we are not going to be complacent," Cronje said. "I can't comment on their state of mind or the atmosphere in the camp since I haven't been following them since the second Test, but one thing we can't afford is to African team in the erstwhile

Cronje is about the only one Leading 1-0 in their series in who has felt constrained to express an opinion on the plight were only denied an extension of the West Indies, whose crickof their advantage by tail-end et throughout the tour has been jeopardy has heightened the resistance at Old Trafford, after abysmal. They are yet to win a public wrath.

bounce back."

first-class match and, in addition to their defeats in the two as captain after he was origi-Tests, lost to Free State, who achieved a winning second-innings target of 438.

They touched rock bottom in faces one of the most critical the second Test, when they folded for 121 in 37.3 overs and 141 in 38.2 overs and lost by 178 runs in barely more than two and a half days cricket.

That prompted media speculation of rifts within the team and angry criticism back in the Caribbean, where a series against a still all-white South believe they are unable to home of apartheid has implications beyond the boundary.

of some match practice be-The pitiful performances of tween Tests by missing the rain-affected game against players whose pre-emptive strike over pay and conditions South Africa A. Shivnarine initially placed the tour in Chanderpaul, who is likely to take his place at No.3, is not one to pass up such opportunities

will stay

Brian Lara's reinstatement and his chanceless 182 was a boost for the West Indies. There has not been much

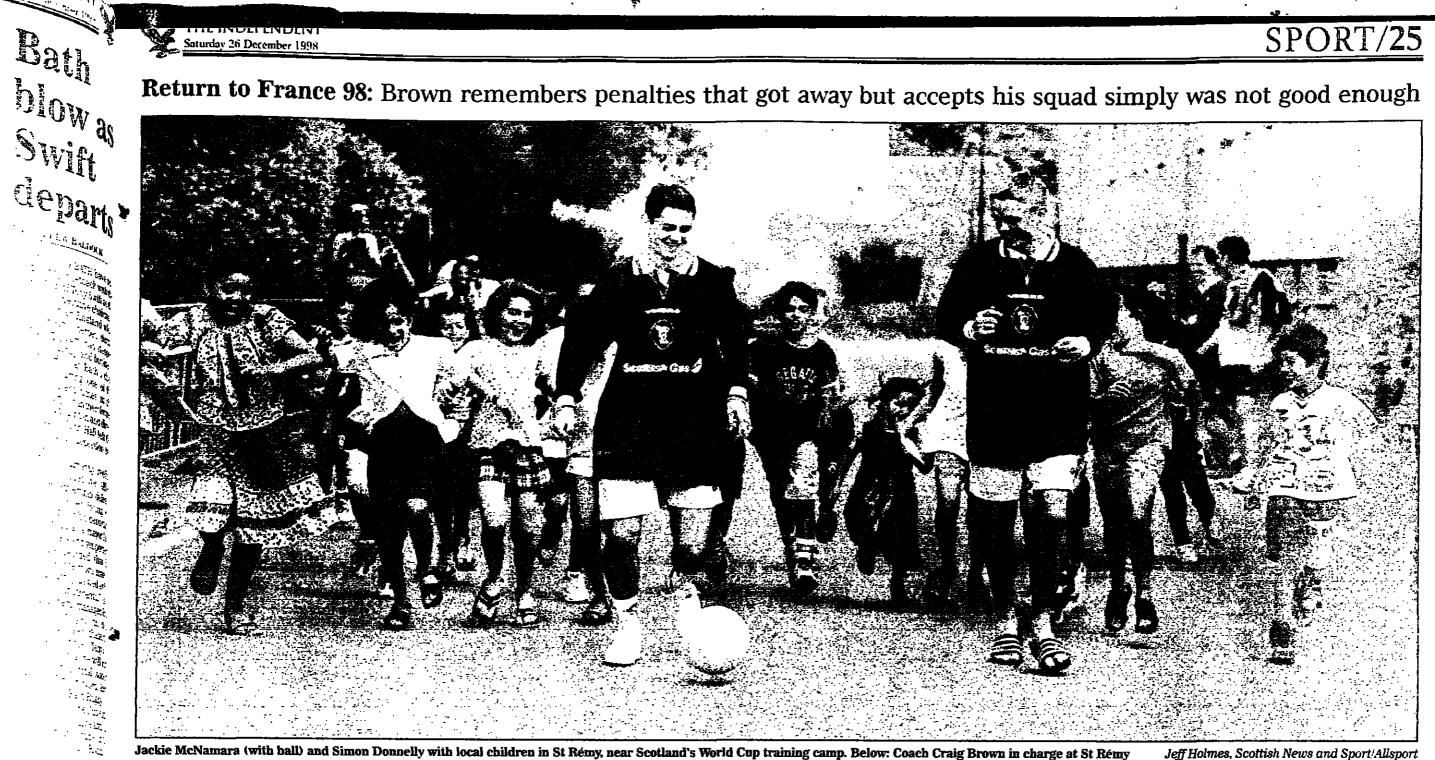
nally dismissed by the Board was one of the central issues in else for them to enthuse over the pre-tour dispute. He now as they continue to rely heavily on their great but ageing fast. matches of his controversial cabowlers, Courtney Walsh and reer following his team's poor Curtly Ambrose, and not much form and his own failure with

the bat with scores of 11, 7, 4 and It will take a massive change of mood and form for them to A measure of his diminishturn things around on a pitch, ing self-belief came in the seclike those in Johannesburg and ond innings of the second Test. Port Elizabeth, likely to aid the when he demoted himself to probing consistency of South Africa's fast bowlers and unit-No.5, where he has indicated he ed and confident team. He passed over the chance

South Africa (from): G Kirsten, H Globs, J Kallis, D Cullinan, H Cronje (cap-tain), J Rhodes, S Pollock, M Boucher, P Syntox, A Donald, D Terbrugge, P Adams. Adams.
West Indies (from): C Lambert, S
Williams, P Wallace, B Lara (captain).
S Chanderpaul, C Hooper, D Ganga, F
Reifer, J Murray, R Jacobs, C Ambrose,
C Walsh, N McLean, M Dillon, F Rose,
R Lewis.

arranged.

Return to France 98: Brown remembers penalties that got away but accepts his squad simply was not good enough



Scots celebrate their 'horror movie'

TOMMY DOCHERTY reckoned they would be home before the postcards. The bookies rated them at 400-1 to win the World Cup. Even the official song by Del Amitri bore the downbeat title of "Don't Come Home Too Soon". At least no one could excuse Scotland of not living up to expectations at France 98.

But when he led his squad off the flight from Marseilles to Glasgow the day after a horribly anticlimactic 3-0 defeat by Morocco had ended the dream for another four years, there were no rotten tomatoes or resignation demands awaiting Craig

To the Scotland manager's astonishment, the police had to hold back a crowd of 1,500 singing, swaying supporters in a sea of tartan. Heaven help the Strathclyde constabulary if the national team ever Brown, who works hard on negating graduate beyond gallant failure in a other team's set-pieces, was dumbmajor tournament.

Brown had sat up until 4.30am in is room at the Scots' base in St-Remy-de-Provence studying what he describes as the "horror movie" of the Moroccan match. Six months on, he is less inclined to see the French adventure as something to be had the better of the opening period Norway hadn't lost in 18 and we ran

viewed from behind the metaoborical sofa.

Even Glenn Hoddle or his ghostwriter would struggle to present a record of no wins, one draw and two defeats as a moral triumph, but Brown uses the evidence of Fifa's statistical bureau to support his contention that the bare figures do not tell the true story.

"Going by their rankings, we were playing three of the top 11 sides on the planet, including the world champions, Brazil, who were always going to get through to the second phase. None of our clubs have had any success in Europe lately, and the World Cup, with the South Americans and Africans involved, is a far more rarified atmosphere."

At the opening game in the Stade soft headed goal inside three minutes following a Brazilian corner. unfortunately I haven't got two Craig founded. "Everyone knew exactly what his job was," he reflects now. "The two players concerned, Gordon Durie and Craig Burley, were sleep-

ing a bit." However, John Collins equalised with a penalty, and Scotland actually

of the second half. Brazil's winner an own goal off Tom Boyd's chest, mocking the Scots once more, though Brown says with candour: "They wouldn't have been able to score a 'lucky' goal if they hadn't been in our six-yard box."

In the build-up to the next game. against Norway in Bordeaux, the media clamoured for Burley to be switched to the central midfield role he filled successfully in Celtic's championship charge. On a sweltering afternoon, the manager resisted until shortly after Scotland fell behind against the run of play early in the second half.

"Burley did a great job in stopping Roberto Carlos against Brazil and he also attacked well," Brown exde France, Scotland conceded a plains, "People said I should have started with him in the middle but Moving to his preferred position,

Burley made his point with a fine equaliser. The Scottish fans celebrated long and loud, believing the point gave them a great chance to progress. Brown sensed it would not be so simple.

"We were unlucky only to draw.



them into the ground but just couldn't get the winner. The feeling was that if we beat Morocco and Brazil beat Norway, we'd be through. But I knew that Brazil, having qualified, wouldn't

be over-exerting themselves."

ighton fishing the ball from his net; or of Burley, hair newly bleached, disproving the notion that blonds have more fun by being sent off. Yet it was not a straightforward case of Morocco outclassing Scotland.

"That was a weird match," argues Brown. "If you show someone the match stats and ask them who they think won, they say Scotland. We had five corners to Morocco's one. 22 goal attempts to 14 by them, 14 on target to their nine, and a greater percentage of possession despite being down to 10 men for the last half hour."

The official, fly-on-the-wall video* with heads slumped on chests and Colin Hendry close to tears. Norway's defeat of Brazil meant that even a victory would not have been enough for Scotland to advance anyway, but the inquest went on until sleep could be stalled no longer.

Brown had to consider whether his loyalty to the veteran Leighton just need to find some strikers." had been misplaced; and to ask himself if he was right to omit Ally Mc-Coist from a 22 not overloaded with good finishers. In each case his an-

his record of 45 clean sheets in 91 caps is exceptional. As for McCoist, I didn't think he was fit enough, or that he'd done enough in the last two months of the season.

Moreover, Brown still cannot quite believe Scotland's "bad luck" in France. "In every match we had a penalty turned down which the replays confirm we should have had. I've worked at three World Cup finals with Alex Ferguson in Mexico in '86, Andy Roxburgh in Italy four years later and now this one - and we've not had a scrap of luck.

"But I don't want it to sound like sour grapes. The bottom line is that good enough. We're a small country and at the moment we with the boorishness of some who don't have the resources. I said at the time that we needed to find a Hamish Zidane or a McRonaldo, but annual dinner of the Highland wing talent tends to come in cycles. I'm of the Tartan Army in Inverness confident that we have some fine young players emerging like Barry Ferguson and Callum Davidson. We

work as a radio summariser. Suffering Norway's negative tactics against Italy in Marseilles he could swer is the same today as it was in not help thinking of what might Provence. "Leighton was out- have been. "The Italians were there The enduring image of the final standing for us in the qualifying and to be beaten. It wasn't the best side (Green Umbrella Video, £11.99).

By the time England were

knocked out by Argentina, also in St Etienne, Brown was back in Bordeaux watching on television in a bar. He is "not convinced" they would have won if David Beckham had not been sent off (unjustly in his opinion). "To watch the BBC Sports Review of the Year you'd have thought England would have won the tournament if only Beckham had stayed on. But I was impressed by them and keen to see them get into the last eight."

Such sentiments will not, it is safe to assume, be echoed by many of the supporters whose penchant for conchaos contrasted so vi were following England. Nevertheless, when Brown attended the first recently, he was touched by the warm reception.

"There were 200 there and they were full of praise for our efforts in Brown returned to France to the World Cup. You get headlines saying 'Fans in rage at Brown' but I haven't met an angry one yet. They usually say: 'It was the best three weeks of my life'.

*Craig Brown's World Cup Diary

Romantsev wants Russia job

OLEG ROMANTSEV, the coach of the Russian champions Spartak Moscow and widely seen as a leating candoon of the sacking of Anatoly Byshovets, has said he wants the job.

"If such an offer was made, then, of course, I will take the job," Romantsev, 45, said yesterday. He added: "Under one condition - I will remain the Spartak coach." If chosen, Romantsev - who wants to look at name his successor on Monday. a new generation of players and make his club a base for the national team - will be Russia's

"I strongly believe that the Bosman ruling is a step backwards for European football," 3.tomantsev added. "I would like to see a constitutional decree in Russia to outlaw players' movement abroad until

OVERSEAS FOOTBALL

a leading candidate to head the they reach the age of 24 or 25." Romantsev has aiready had a two-year stint with the national squad, which ended with a disappointing display at Euro 96. Meanwhile, Byshovets, 52, has reportedly received an offer to coach the Iran Olympic squad. The Russian Football Union's executive board will

There was good news for

Romantsev yesterday with the announcement that his Spartak third coach in less than six Moscow midfielder Yegor Titov, 22, had been chosen Russia's player of the year in a poll by the football weekly Football. This year, Russia have lost six straight matches, including all three of their European qualifiers, forcing Byshovets to step

down last week.

Spanish football fans caused more than 30m pesetas (£132,000) worth of damage to the Montjuic Olympic stadium

after Catalonia's 5-0 thrashing of Nigeria on Tuesday. The pitch was left in a poor state by an invasion of around 2,000 celebrating supporters, more than 1,000 seats were broken, and some toilets were wrecked, stadium managers said on Thursday. The First Division club Espanyol use the ground and emergency repairs

are underway before their next home game on 17 January. All 26 clubs in China's first division falsified financial records this year to hide payments for thrown games and bribes to referees, according to the Liberation Daily in Shanghai. "Many figures seem to be

Chinese Football Association told the newspaper.

CFA rules require proof, in the form of receipts, for all expenditure by the clubs, but every club turned in false receipts to cover up their real figures, claimed the official. The former Dutch interna-

ta Rotterdam, replacing Hans van der Zee. Morocco's World Cup striker Mustapha Hadji, who came to the world's attention with some fine performances this summer in France, has been

named African Footballer of The poll, run by African Football Magazine, saw Leeds' South African captain Lucas false," an official with the Radebe finish seventh in the voting.

NBA may Two Birmingham end season in January players get the bullet

BASKETBALL

THE NATIONAL Basketball Association in the United States tional Jan Everse has been is ready to cancel the season on named as the new coach of 7 January if no agreement is reached with the players over Dutch First Division side Sparthe 17-day labour dispute.

The NBA deputy commissioner, Russ Granik, has declared the League would recommend to their Board of Governors it should vote to cancel the season on 7 January.

However, he also said he expects to meet again with the Players' Association before then. It is the first definitive "take it or leave it" date announced by the League. NBA commissioner David Stern had avoided mentioning a definitive date, claiming it would hamper negotiations and, without an agreement, the season would cancel itself. Some players have indicated they are ready to agree to the owners' latest offer.

THE TRAUMA continues at BY RICHARD TAYLOR Birmingham Bullets where coach Mike Finger sacked two of his players on Christmas Eve, just a week after the Bas-

ketball League took control of the club from its' former owner Harry Wrublewski. Bullets go into tomorrow's Budweiser League game against Leicester City Riders at the NEC without American Chuck Guittar and the former England International

Mark Considine. Finger said: "I want the team to win more than anything, but I'm not going to have anyone on my side who is not 100 per cent committed to the Bullets. There have been times this season when we looked as though we lacked heart on court. The majority of the players know how much this club means to its fans and feel just as committed themselves. I needed to make sure we are all of that mind. When you are in a Birmingham Bullet."

a tight situation that can mean the difference between a win and a loss." Last season Birmingham were league runners-up and

went on to win the play-offs at Wembley, but this season they are only fifth after nine wins and seven defeats. Uncertainty over the club's

future ended last week when Mr Wrublewski announced his imminent return to Australia The League will handle club affairs until a new owner is found for the franchise, one of the most financially stable, best supported and attractive in the

Finger said: "The new board have given me the go-ahead to look for replacements, and I want guys who can prove to me they have enough heart and commitment to call themselves

Another player with an unwelcome Christmas surprise was Brad Wedel, who was ditched by Edinburgh Rocks to make way for American Michael New, who previously played for coach Jim Brandon at Manchester Giants.

TODAY'S NUMBER

864 The number of senior

football games played by Stenhousemair's 42-year-old central defender Graeme Armstrong, assuming he starts today's Scottish League Third
Division game against East
Stirling, hire. It will be a
British record for an
outfield player, eclipsing the
mark set by the former
Scottish inventional Scottisk international

finance department of the SPORTING DIGEST

AMERICAN FOOTBALL Randall Cunningham, the Minnesoa Vikings quarterback, has won a multi-year contract extension. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. The Vikings also gave a multi-year ex-tension to one of the men paid to protect Cumingham, offensive tackprotect Cunningham, offensive tackle Korey Stringer. The 35-year-old
Cunningham, who was out of football before last season but is now
a top candidate for Player of the Year
honours, has led the Vikings to a
league-best and franchise-best 141 record while becoming the NFL's
top passer with a 107.3 rating.
The Green Ray Dackers right tackle The Green Bay Packers right tackle Earl Dotson, a starter for the last four years, has signed a four-year contract extension worth nearly \$15m (£9m).

The Green Bay Packers linebacker Jude Waddy, 23, has been suspended four games, in accordance with league rule books, by the NFL for steroid use. FOOTBALL

FOOTBALL

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE:
Re-Arranged Dates: Tue Jam 26:
Bournemouth v Preston (ex Tue Jam 26:
Bournemouth v Preston (ex Tue Jam 12);
Macclesfield v Millwall (ex Sat Jam 2). Fri
Fieb 12: Rochdale v Hull City (ex Sat Feb
13). Fri Feb 19: Sheffield Utd v Bradford City (ex Sat Feb 20). Sam Feb 21:
Birmingham v Bolton (ex Sat Feb 21:
Birmingham v Bolton (ex Sat Feb 20). Fri
Feb 26: Watford v Swindon (ex Sat Feb
27). Sam Feb 28: Crystal Palace v Barrsley (ex Sat Feb 27).
BRAZILIAN CHAMPIONSHIP Final
third leg: Coninthians 2 (Edison 65: Marcelinho Carroca 83) Cruzeiro 0 (Carinthians win keague).

Steve Carpenter and Rick Brebant have become the latest Sekonda Superleague players to be penalised by the ISL Disciplinary Committee. The forward Brebant, who plays for leaders Manchester Storm, was given a three-match ban and a £250 fine afcommittee felt that he failed to control his stick in a match at Bracknell on 12 December. The Nottingham Panther' defenceman Carpenter has been handed a two-match ban and a £250 fine, after the committee increased his two-minute high sticks punishment against Lon-don on 15 December to a match

penalty. Buffalo 2 Tampa Bay 0, Boston 1 Philadelphia 2; Piorida D Washington 4; New Jersey 4 St. Louis 2; New York Rangers 0 Carolina 1; Outawa 3 Montreal 1; Dalias 5 Toronto 1; Nashville 5 Detroit 3; Chicago 4 Phoenix 3; San Jose 5 Edmonton 3; Vancouver 5 Calgary 2; Detroit 2 Pheenix 6; New York Islanders 3 St. Louis 3 (of): Pittsburgh 0 Los Angeles 3; Calgary 3 Vancouver 5 : Colorado 0 Anahelm 1.

RUGBY LEAGUE Welsh international forward Mark Perrett has signed for the First Division club Oldham after being released by the Super League side Halifax Blue Sox.

SPEEDWAY Wolverhampton Wolves have signed the World Under-21 finalist Nicki Pedersen, of Denmark, Pedersen topped the Premier League averages on his debut season last year.

SUMO The yokozuna (grand champion) Akebono will sit out next month's Grand Sumo tournament to recov-

or an a hernia. Akebono returned on Thursday from Hawaii, where he was diagnosed with a hernia and was told it needs another she weeks to heal. The New Year Grand Surno bout in Tolera will be Akebono's second. in Tokyo will be Akebono's second missed tournament in a row. He sat out the Kyushu Grand Sumo Tour-nament in November because of the same injury. Akebono, formerly Chad Rowan of Hawaii, is the first foreign wrestler to reach the rank of yokozuna, sumo's top position.

TENNIS Japan's Takao Suzuki and South Korea's Sung-Hee Park were named as the Asian wildcards for next month's vildcards for next month's Australian Open at Melbourne.

WEDNESDAY'S LOTTERY UPDATE.

Draw date: 23/12/98. The winning numbers: 4, 12, 18, 30, 38, 47. Bonus number: 20. Total Sales: £30,084,118. Prize Fund: £13,537.853 (45% of ticket sales).

CATEGORY	NO. OF WINNERS	AMOUNT FOR EACH WINNER	TOTAL EACH TIER
Match 6 (Jackpot)	4	£1,030,840	£4.123,360
Match 5 plus bonus ball	17	£74.630	£1.268.710
Match 5	752	£1,054	£792,606
Match 4	33,227	£52	£1.727,804
Match 3	560.831	£10	£5.608,310
TOTAL S	594.831		£13,520,792



Maybe, just maybe. 🏙 THE NATIONAL LOTTERY in the event of any discrepancy in the above, the data contained in Cemelor central computer system shall prevail



THE SWEEPER

BY CLIVE WHITE AND NICK HARRIS



Shayler: I'm no 'smog chomper'

and former MI5 agent David Shayler has admitted that it was only Boro's capacity for

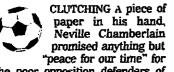
successfully fought the British Government's plea for his extradition.

His plan was to tear off his outer shirt, Superman style to reveal a Boro away top ("I was playing away from home") upon hearing the court's verdict, but changed his mind at the last moment.

Had it followed last week's unscheduled win by Bryan Robson's side at Old Trafford he might have thought differently.

Instead he wore the top when released from La Sante prison as a way of thanking those fans who had supported him throughout his ordeal. He was, though, somewhat irked by a letter he received while in prison from the Independent Manchester United Supporters Association, who had heard he was a "smog chomper".

They even had the cheek to ask me if I was a Johnny-cum-latelyglory-seeking Boro fan because I haven't got a Teeside accent," he said. "Imagine that, being accused of being a glory-seeker by a Man Utd fan. I think that shocked me more than my arrest, imprisonment and subsequent release put to-



the poor opposition defenders of the Hanley and District League last week. The former Stoke wingercum-striker, now player-joint manager of Birches Head Gardeners. was holding the freshly-signed registration form of his brother, Mark, whose pace once dazzled the great Brazilians themselves. As comedowns go, the Maracana stadium to a recreation pitch in the Potteries is a drop of heaven-to-earth proportions, but the Chamberlains - Neville they were players together at the old

tionship with Sheffield Wednesday and English football in general lead, as "snatching defeat from the jaws of victory," and "good old fashioned superstition" which prevented him from wearing a Boro shirt at his court should be suppreciated in the home of the beautiful game but hearing in France recently, when he so, too, would his not-so-beautiful temperament, because in Brazil it's

not just referees who get assaulted but also players - by referees. In a recent tense championship quarter-final between Corinthians and Gremio, most of the rough stuff came from the referee. Marcio Rezende de Freitas. He shouted and argued with players and when two of them clashed he liter-

> **SONG SHEET** A touching festive message from Pompey fans to their Saints counterparts

66 Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Scum can go to hell, Oh what fug it'il be to win, Next season at The Dell 99

ally collared the pair of them, yanking them towards him by the scruff of their shirts. And when a third player approached, he saw him off with a Di Canio-style shove in the chest. Come to think of it, a dose of his own medicine might do the errant Italian some good.

GIANT KILLERS they may be, but Conference club Rushden & Diamonds have decided they may be better off with a Goliath on their side if they are to defeat David next Saturday encounter with David O'Leary's Leeds United. Hence the decision is 38, Mark 37 - are just happy to be to sign 6ft 7in American Ian Feuer choice keepers. Furthermore, he is of something festive. Answer next

SHOULD PAOLO Di alsigning his "19 minutes of fame" Canio's strained rela-coming against Morocco in Casablanca six years ago. Feuer, who has had past spells with West Ham, Luton and Peterborough, is the latest in a long line of American goalkeepers to come to these shores - a case perhaps, of many are called, Feuer are chosen.

> DESPITE WIDESPREAD objections towards the appointment of the untried David Platt as "coach" of Sampdoria, not everyone has been critical of his selection. The former England coach Don Howe is in no doubt that Platt possesses the right credentials to be a success. He also points out that his old playmate Bobby Robson has gone on record several times as saving that he wished he had managed abroad before managing in England. As for coming in at the top. David O'Leary said only last week that he thought there was nothing to be gained by starting at the bottom, and would, no doubt, endorse the former Highbury man's ap-pointment. Particularly if Platt takes Lee Sharpe off his hands.

STEPPING UP from the dressing room to the manager's office has always been one of football's trickier career moves, but David O'Leary seems to have negotiated it less awkwardly than most since succeeding George Graham as Leeds manager last month. No longer "one of the lads", he is now afforded proper respect by players like Dutch striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, who has ceased to call him "Paddy". Instead he now calls him "Paddy Gaffer".

CHELSEAS LAST Championship success may have been as long ago as 1954-55 but it would be a mistake to suggest that they therefore don't know what it takes to win one. No fewer than nine of the current first-team squad have won championships in other in their classic FA Cup third round countries, and there is a tenth in the reserves. Who are they and what teams were they titlists with? The first all-correct answer to be sent or this young club's first internation-week, Merry Christmas, one and all.

AS YOU WERE



Secondly, no-one can imagine George Best (today, left) ever recommending just the one six-pack. And thirdly, the youngster on Santa's knee is actually Calum, his son.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

week, but there's plenty of ammo left in

the locker. Manchester United have two hopes (Bob Hope and no hope) of beating Internazionale in the European Cup. but hapless Nottingham Forest are more their cup of tea and the (home to doomed Charlton) can a full strength squad again, are provide the linchpins for some worth a title flutter.

A GOAL away from four-timers. Sick of forecasting the more glory last home win. draw, or away win outcome of live games only to do our dough when correct scores and first goalscorers elude us. The Price Is Right is henceforth taking advantage of the single bet facility. So get on Aston Villa to beat Blackburn in tonight's sell-yoursoul-for-a-satellite-dish clash on

LIBERO WAGERS

(15 x £1 four timers with William Hill): Coventry to draw with Tottenham (11-5): Everton to draw with Derby 5-1, Coral & William Hill.) (9-4): Manchester United to beat Nottingham Forest (2-5); Newcastle to draw with Leeds (9-4); Sheffield Wednesday to draw with Leicester (9-4); Wim-BOXING DAY SKY MATCH

Aston Villa (£2 at 5-4, William Hill & Stanley) ANTE-POST ACTION Arsenal to win Premiership (£3 at

ORIGINAL BANK: £100. **CURRENT KITTY: £115.43!**

TODAY'S BETS: £21.80 (including £1.80 tax paid on).

GOALPOSTS OF **CHRISTMAS PAST**

Five famous matches played on 25 December

CHRISTMAS DAY 1894 Bolton beat Liverpool 1-0, a defeat that helped send Liverpool down to the Second Division come 1895.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1912 Manchester United won 4-1 at Chelsea. United finished the season fourth, and the Blues 18th of 20.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1914 English and German soldiers stopped fighting the

First World War to play football in no man's lands. It cannot be confirmed the Germans won on penalties, but recent history suggests they probably did.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1946 Barnsley drew 4-4 with Southampton at Barns-

ley. Some claim it was the last excitement either side has given their fans over a festive period. They drew again the next day, 1-1, in Southampton.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1959

Blackburn won 1-0 at home to Blackpool in 1959, the last year football was routinely played on Christmas Day at the highest level in England.

MY TEAM



FATHER CHRISTMAS

GSS NUUK

Chief Yuletide gift-giver, northern hemisphere "GSS Nuuk, my local team in Greenland, are hoping to play in the Greenland Champions' League next season, providing their squad are old enough. Most of the team are children – although they're still bigger than Liverpool's back three – but they still have a popular following. We rarely have any crowd trou-ble, although there was a nasty incident last season when some visiting Innuit fans had a bit of a run-in with a couple of my reindeer outside the ground in a dispute over who had the reddest hooter."

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: Quotes from 1998 and before To play Holland, you have to play the Dutch." - Ruud Gullit talks sexy footballs. "England now have three fresh men, with three fresh legs." - Jimmy Hill talks maths.

"There's Bergkamp standing on the halfway line, with his hands on his hips, flalling his arms about." - John Scales talks about the Netherlands' octopus. '[Phil Neville] was treading on dangerous water there." - Ron Atkinson talks mixed metaphors. "The Croatians don't play well without the ball." – Ватту 'The Hair' Venison talks tactics. http://www.geocities.com/SouthBeach/Pal ms/6687/pundits.html

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

NEWCASTLE UNITED'S Premier Collection Xmas Hamper (price £205.00, what a bargain) has all manner of NUFC booze, tea bags and other stuff in it, not to mention some lumps of Wensleydale cheese. For the devoted Magpie, however, a better bet might be a pack of 24 NUFC Christmas cards, bearing such wildly amusing slogans as "Ha'way in a manger" and "Santa is a Geordie." Buy now for next year Or not.

THEY'RE NOT **ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP**

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 19 SIGURDSSON: The 25-vear-old Icelandic international central defender joined Stoke in 1994 from Thor after a former Potters player, Toddy Orlygsson (his cousin) had recommended him. After a somewhat shaky start, he became a first team regular and a steady performer. Powerful in the air, quick, and said to be a good reader of the game, he was an ever-present in the side in the 1995-96 season, missed only one game in the

team mates, has won 15 full

international caps.



Elton John's uncle was all Dwight by me

IN THE secure, cosy carapace and Mitcham. Forced to play on no football welfare state to protect the weak, the careless or the merely unfortunate. To the quest, to the defeated only defailure. Never were the highs or lows of the game felt more vividly than in just 23 minutes in the life of one player 40 sea-

When Roy Dwight walked out onto the sun-drenched Wembley turf with his Nottingham Forest team mates to face Luton Town in the 1959 FA Cup final he must have believed that he had tasted already the extremes of human experience. Just four months previously the Reds had en-

that is our modern existence we a treacherous, frost-rutted surlook to football to provide us face on which no modern refwith life on the edge. There is eree would tread, even to perform the most cursory of pitch inspections, Forest were 2-0 down and staring ignominy victor, all the spoils of con- between the eyes. Ravenous journalists were turning over in spair, desperation and utter their minds the headlines that would announce the cup upset of the decade. However, a facesaving draw was achieved and the replay duly won. Now 100,000 joyous voices welcomed the players onto the ultimate

field of dreams. Nine minutes into a game whose early stages Forest had dominated Stewart Imlach shot into the roof of the net. The ed. A 12-year-old watching my dured the most humiliating of first "away" game, I remained action bomb. What Roy Dwight defeats at the hands of Tooting silent. The whole Wembley ex- must have felt at that moment day of triumph at Wembley, going home by bus?

FAN'S EYE VIEW

ROY DWIGHT

BY STEPHEN SHAW

perience had been just too much to take in. My mind simply could not accept the fact that Forest were winning. The goal had to be disallowed. Why were all of these fools cheering? Could they not understand that pulled back the ball and Roy there must have been a foul or Dwight volleyed a thunderous an offside flag. Even the play- bed he must have been able to ers were celebrating. Were they Forest end of the ground erupt- mad? Slowly, the truth dawned and I exploded like a delayed-

minutes later and Tommy Wilson added a second. Forest room in the pursuit of autowere coasting. Oh dear, someone went down injured. Who was it? It seemed to be Roy Dwight. Then he was getting up, thank God. Now who was injured this time? It was Roy Dwight again. They were bringing on the stretcher. Just 32 minutes gone and Dwight's soul crept forward and asked game was over, his leg broken. for his autograph. What depths of despair he must have trawled as he was taken to hospital, leaving his colleagues to scrap it out in defence of their lead for another hour. Later, as he watched them parading the cup around the stadium from his hospital

My abiding memory of Roy Dwight, however, is not of that

put "mixed feelings" into a new

is beyond comprehension. Five Early the following season I was waiting outside the changing graphs. The last one to emerge was known to be rather difficult. He pushed past us, met his wife and strode out of the ground. We followed at a discrete distance. As luck would have it he boarded the same corporation bus as us. Eventually a brave

"No, son," the player snapped. Two points reflect the gulf that separates the modern game from that of yestervear. Firstly, if being asked to sign an autograph after a game was an unwelcome intrusion into that player's privacy, then what would he have made of the sort of media attention the likes of Paul Gascoigne endure? Secondly, can we imagine a Premiership footballer

Half an hour before this incident occurred Roy Dwight had emerged from the changing room, still using his post-Wembley crutch. Immediately he was mobbed by young fans. Spotting his plight, a policeman moved in. He sensed that he was not needed.

"Alright, Roy?" he asked. "Fine," our hero replied as be set about our autograph books. What a player, and what a great bloke. Today's footballer is as big a celebrity as the greatest pop star. Four decades ago that was not the case. Even Roy Dwight's greatest admirer would agree that he was not as big a name worldwide as his nephew although young Reg Dwight had to change his name before he found fame in the world of popular music. In Nottingham, however, older folk will still ask: "Elton John! Isn't he Roy Dwight's nephew?

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

I am a very well paid entertainer but when I see figures bandied around like £18m for Alan Shearer it makes me laugh. It is absolutely ridiculous and money for old rope. Then you see the players' attitudes - they are paid so much money and they're just strolling around the pitch. Elton John, Watford chairman.

When you're inside an ambulance with a nurse, an anaesthetist and a specialist with his bag of tricks you don't worry about your team's position in the Football League. Graham Taylor, Watford manager, on his emergency trip to hospital with a throat abscess.

He is mad about bananas. He has them in everything, even in his soup. If he reached into his pocket for a pen, he would probably pull out a banana. Middlesbrough captain Andy Townsend on the dietary requirements of his team-mate. Hamilton Ricard.

I just wanted to be able to talk smack, be on the corner drink some beer, whup somebody's butt now and then.

Mike Tyson on his childhood dreams.

I don't give a monkeys how we did it. John Gregory. Aston Villa manager. after the 1-0 win over Charlton.

Festive feats and feasts of goals

Boxing Days down the years have regularly served up healthy helpings of enjoyment. By Steve Tongue

Tranmere 13 Oldham 4

FOR MANY years tradition dictated that teams played each other twice at Christmas, generally (until Christmas Day football finished in the late-1950s) on the 25th and 26th. Whether or not winning teams tended to overdo the celebrations, there were some extraadinary reversals in the two mes, including this one.

Having beaten Tranmere. who were top of the table, 4-1 the previous day Oldham must have arrived at Prenton Park for their Third Division North game full of good cheer. Whatever else they were full of, Tranmere took advantage by scoring six times



in the first 20 minutes. Bunny Bell (pictured), the centre-forward who would later follow Dixie Dean across the Mersey to Everton, claimed three of those and added two more before half-time, at which stage the visitors staggered back to the dressing-room 8-1 down.

The home side reached dou-

ble figures before Oldham got second and at 11-4 there were fully 20 minutes left. But ere was no further so until the last two minutes, when Bell, having missed a penalty, defied the ankle-deep mud by striking twice more to set a new individual record of nine in a match. Bizarrely, that stood for only four months, Luton Town's Joe Payne switching from wing half to score 10 against Bristol Rovers in his first senior

a centre-forward. Transnere failed to gain promotion and finished only four places above Oldham. The missed penalty prevented Tranmere standing alone as the only side to score 14 in a League match, but the matchaggregate of 17 goals stands to



1963 West Ham 2 Blackburn 8

Roy Bailey, the Ipswich goalkeeper, saves a shot from Graham Leggat against Fulham in 1963. However, Gary's dad let in 10 goals that Boxing Day

tricky little England winger,

Bryan Douglas, ran amok in the

scored one goal and laid on two

others, for Andy McEvoy and

Mike Ferguson. In the second

half, goalkeeper Jim Standen

and a defence including Bobby

Moore were beaten four times

more as McEvov and Pickering

both completed hat-tricks be-

fore Byrne scored his second.

manager Ron Greenwood de-

After the game West Ham's

1970 Derby 4 Manchester Utd 4

the space of three minutes, WITH THE score level at 1-1 after almost half-an-hour's play, and later adding a fourth. Three goals also came from and Johnny "Budgie" Byrne possibly the least heralded having just hit the bar, West member of the side, a left-Ham followers had no reason to

with the club. The secuel was as unexpected as the result, even by the unpredictable standard of these two clubs. Teams still played each other twice over Christmas and in the return at Portman Road 48 hours later, mud. By half-time he had

Ipswich won 4-2.

winger called Bobby Howfield,

who was in his only season

1963 Fulham 10 Ipswich 1

26 DECEMBER 1963 was the

day it rained goals, with 66

scored in 10 First Division

chairman, John Cobbold, had

a characteristic explanation

for the result at Craven Cot-

tage: "Only our goalkeeper

Roy Bailey, whose son Gary

would later play in goal for

Manchester United, was the

unfortunate man betwen the

sticks on this occasion, against

a Fulham side that was also

near the bottom, but had play-

ers of the quality of Johnny

Haynes, Bobby Robson, Alan

Mullery and the England full-

backs George Cohen and Jim

of the damage, Graham Leg-

gat recording the quickest

ever hat-trick at this level, in

It was a Scot who did most

was sober!

Langley

Ipswich Town's epicurean

Champions only 19 months earlier, their ageing side were nevertheless on the way to relegation. They eventually conceded 121 goals in 42 games, which included losing 9-1 at Stoke and 7-2 at home to Manchester United.

liberately stayed away from the dressing-room, going to his office instead to write out a team for the return match. He initially made nine changes. believe that a Cockney Christthen eventually decided on just mas was about to be ruined by one, replacing Martin Peters the club's worst-ever home dewith the more combative Eddie Bovington. In the second game, Byrne had equalised an Douglas was curbed and goals early goal by Fred Pickering, by Byrne (2) and Geoff Hurst but thereafter Blackburn's gave the London side enjoyable

and unexpected revenge. The only unhappy Eastender was Peters, unable to reclaim his place for the rest of a season that took West Ham all the way to Wembley and victory over Preston in the FA Cup

Blackburn slipped to seventh, despite scoring 89 League goals, 32 of them by the Irish international McEvoy.

West Ham: Byrne 2 Blaing 3,McEvoy 3, Douglas tendance: 20,500.

EVENTFUL ENOUGH in itself. this game was even more significant for what followed two days later - the sacking of Wilf McGuinness as United's manager. Promoted to take on the daunting, if not impossible, task of succeeding Sir Matt Busby, the likeable McGuinness had a reasonable first season in which United finished eighth and reached the semi-final of both domestic cups. The second

مكذا من الاحل

playing regularly. They went to the Baseball Ground in danger of slipping into a relegation struggle, on the back of embarrassing home defeats by Manchester City (4-1) and Arsenal (3-1, in front of only 33,000), followed by a League Cup semi-final defeat against Aston Villa, then in the Third Division.

one was harder, even with

Charlton, Law and Best still

Derby were not yet at their peak, but had the nucleus of the following year's championship side in players like McFarland, Gemmill, Durban, O'Hare and Hector. So on the face of it, an away draw, after trailing 2-0 at the interval, did not look a bad result. United came back strongly to enthral a crowd close to capacity and earned a useful point with goals by Brian Kidd, Best and Law (2).

McGuinness was therefore shattered to be called into Busby's office the following day and told: "The directors have asked me to take charge again." The team improved considerably to finish eighth once more; McGuinness reverted briefly to his old job with the reserves, then went to Greece, where his hair fell out.

Oldham 3

TWENTY-ONE years on, United finally appeared to have another manager capable of winning the League championship. A free-wheeling victory up the road at Boundary Park in a midday kick-off took Alex Ferguson's team to the top of the table.

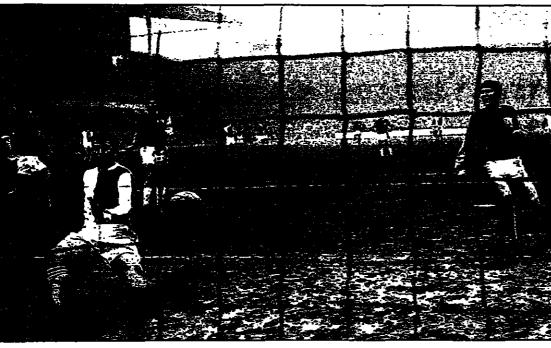
It was a huge game for Joe Royle's Oldham, playing in the top division for the first time in their history and cramming almost 19,000 into their ground. They saw United take a 2-0 lead at half-time, with their former full-back Denis Irwin (pictured) among the scorers. Graham Sharp halved the deficit but, as a rousing second half wore on. Irwin scored again, and with Andrei Kanchelskis Brian Mc-Clair (2) and Ryan Giggs (a substitute for Bryan Robson) also contributing. United led 4-1 and 5-2 before finishing comfortable winners.

When United drew 1-1 at Elland Road three days later, they were two points ahead of Leeds, having played two games fewer, and were therefore strongly fancied to take the title after a 25-year wait.

Winning away to Leeds in the FA Cup and the League Cup should have provided a further psychological boost and with four games to go United were still favourites. They then contrived to lose at home to Nottingham Forest and at West Ham and away to Liverpool, while a certain Eric Cantona inspired Leeds to



three wins in four games and the championship. It had seemed a highly unlikely outcome on Boxing Day.



Andy McEvoy scores for Blackburn at West Ham in 1963 (left), while David Webb plays the whole game in goal for Chelsea v Ipswich in 1971



...and briefly

ue debut for Ful

Southampton. leaves them fifth in the table, but they eventually win the championship for the

1962 Oldham beat Southport 11-0 in the Fourth Division, scoring nine times in 42 minutes, with six from centre-forward Bert Lister. 1971 Chelsea defender David Webb

plays the whole game in goal against lpswich because of injuries, and keeps

1979 In a critical meeting of the top two at Anfield, Liverpool beat Man-chester United 2-0 (Hansen, Johnson) and go on to win the title by two points. 1983 Charlie Nicholas, who had not scored since August, comes good at last in an eventful north London derby as Arsenal win 4-2 at Tottenham.

1987 Liverpool pass Christmas un-beaten in 20 matches after a 3-0 win at Oxford (Aldridge Barnes McMahon). 1997 Arsenal, 13 points behind Manchester United in sixth place, beat Leicester 2-1 with Steve Walsh's own

WEEKEND FIX-

TODAY

FOOTBALL

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE PIRST DIVISION

gham v Sheffield Utd... v Bradford City (1.0) rewe v Bury luddersfield v Grimsby Ipswich v Portsmouth Oxford Utd v Crystal Palace... CPR v Norwich (12.0)
Stockport v Barnsley (1.0)
Swindon v Wolves
Transere v Sunderland ord v Bristol City (12.0) 21 We Bromwich & Port Vale (1.0).

24 Chesterfield v Olchern 25 Fulham v Colchester (12.0) 26 Uncoln City v Macclesfield 27 Lutton v Parclesfield

28 Mithwall v Bournemouth (12.0)
29 Notis County v Northampton
30 Stoke v Preston...
31 Walsall v Wycombe
32 Wrosham v Manchester Goy (12.0)
33 York v Burnley.

THERD DIVISION
35 Brighton v Brentford (12.0)
36 Cambridge Uso v Rotherham
37 Candill v Shrentsbury (12.0)
38 Exerce v Broquay (11.0)
39 Halfax v Darington (2.0)
Hull v Chester.

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
Juniermine v Aberdeen Dulyermane v Augustia Kulmarnock v Hearts Motherwell v Dundee Utd SCOTTISH LEAGUE FIRST DAVISION

FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

Welling v Dover (12.0)

RYMANN LEAGUE Premier Division: St Albans v Bescop's Storriord (11.0).

UNIDOND LEAGUE Premier Division: St Albans v Bescop's Storriord (11.0).

UNIDOND LEAGUE Premier Division:
Barnber Bridge v Lancaster: Blyth Spartans
v Gateshead (11.30): Chorley v Winsford Und:
Colwyn Bay v Leigh RMI; Frickley v Whilby:
Gainsborough Trinity v Worksop: Guiseley v
Emicy. Hyde v Stalybridge, Marune v Accrington Scanley, Runcom v Aftrincham;
Spennymoor v Bisnop Auckland, First Division: Alfreno w Markot; Ashton Und v Stodesbridge; Bradford Park Ameno v Lincoln Utal
(1.0); Congleton v Burscough; Fixon v Trailord; Great Harwood v Farsley, Gretne v Witcley Bay (1.0): Harrogate Town v Eastwood

Town: Hucknail v Beiper, Netherfield v
Droylsden: Radciffer v Witcon.

DR MARTIEMS LEAGUE Premier Division: u Dover (12.0)

Town: Hucknall v Betper: Netherfield v Droylsden; Radcliffer v Witton.
Both City v Salisbury: Bromsgrove v WorcesBoth City v Salisbury: Bromsgrove v Worcester City, Merthyn Tydlis (Grantham v Bleston Town (12.0). Hastings v Crawley (10.9): Grantham v Bleston Town (12.0). Hastings v Crawley (12.0): Tamwords v Halesowen Town (12.0): Weymouth v Dordrester Middland Drown (12.0): Weymouth v Dordrester Middland Drown (12.0): Weymouth v Dordrester Middland Drown (12.0): Regional v Blesword (1.0): Cinderlord v Newport (Gwent) (12.0): Sestanting (12.0): Sealison Blakenall v Blowwich (1.0): Cinderlord v Newport (Gwent) (12.0): Sestanting Variables: Hinckley Utd v Bedworth (12.0): Reddicth v Solibull Borough (12.0): Sealison Coldfield v Pager Rangers: Weston-super-Mare v Devedon (1.0). Southern Dhriston: Andower v Witney: Ashford v Folkestone Invita (12.30): Brackley v Ballock (Grencester v Vate: Erith & Belvedere v Cheimsford: Feber Arhietor v Darford: Hawn & Waterfoowlie v Fieet (12.0), Margate v Stringbourne: Newport (16.0): V Bashley (10): Ramstrown Erope Remoter (12.0): Waterfoowlie v Fieet (12.0), Wargate v Stringbourne: Newport (16.0): V Bashley (10): Ramstrown Erope Remoter (18.0): Waterfoowlie v Fieet (12.0): Waterfoowlie v Stringstown (10.0): Ramstrown (12.0): Ramst

LEONATOS .
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE Premier WINSTORILE OF REAL PROPERTY LEAGUE PROBLEM REAL PROBLEM R [11.0]: Whitehawk v Shoreham.
SCREMPIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Diwision: Barnstapie v Bideford; Bishop Sutton v Keynsham (11.0): Brislington v
Backwei; Bristol Manor Farm v Mangossfield
(11.0): Meltisham v Chippenham: Odd Down
v Paulton (11.0): Thereton v Emore: Westbury v Caine; Yeovif v Bridgoot.
MORTTH MESTERRE TRAINE I E AST IN EM-

oury v Laine; Yeovil v Bridport.

NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE First Division: Arherton Coffenes v Arherton LR; Cheadle v Vaschall GM; Midsgrove v Newcastle Yown; Mainer Road v Salford, Mossier v Glossop; Nantwich v Leek CSOB; Prescot v Bootle; Ramsbottom v Rossendaie: Sudmersdaie v St Helens, Workington v Holker (1.0).

NORTHERN COUNTRES EAST LEAGUE Presider Division; Arnold v Pontefract: Denressurer Divisions Arnold v Ponterinat. Den-aby v Armthorpe; Glasshoughton v Buston; Hallam v Brigg [11.0], Liversedge v Eccleshilt Matthy v Össett Albon, North Ferriby v Sheffield, Ossett Town v Seby (12.0); Stave-ley v Pickering [12.0); Thackley v Garforth, INTERLINK EXPRESS: Bases Assets rey o'rickering (12.0); inaciley o Cartoria. INTERLIMIK EXPRESS MIDLAND AL-LIANCE: Barwell o Sandwell (12.0); hales-owen Harriers o'Pershore. Kings Norron o Boldmere; Knypersley o Bridgnorth; Pelsail v Stourport; Kushall o'Otbury; Srilmal o' Chaserown; Stapenhil o'Willenhall: Stratford

JEWISON WESSEX LEAGUE: BAT Sports v Totton (11.0): Bemerton Heath v Whitchurch (12.0): Christchurch v Bournemouth (12.0): Cowes v East Cowes Afflichurch (12.0): Christchurch v Sournemouth (12.0): Cowes v East Cowes (11.30): Eastleigh v Hamble (11.0): Fareham v Gosport (1.30): Lymgton & New Milton v Brockenhurst (1.0): Moneyfields v Portsmouth RN (11.30): Thatcham v New-bury: Mimborne v Downton (1.0). bury; Mimborne v Downton (1.0).

ARMOTT INSURANCE MORTHERN
LEAGUE Phis Diddson Bedilington v Consert Billingham Town v Billingham Synthonia (11.0); Chester-le-Street v Easington (12.0). Guisborough v Marske (11.0); Newcaste Blue Star v Morpeth; Pentith v Kov Law; Seaham v Dunston (11.0); Shilidon v West Auckiand; South Shields v Janow (11.0); Stockton v Crook.

LEAGUE OF WALLES: Abenystwyth v Havesfordwest; C.30); Bangor City v Caernarton (2.30); Barry v Inser Cable-lei Cardiff (11.30); Carmarthen v Afan Lido (2.30); Conny v Rhyl (2.30); Holywell v Connait's Quay Momads (2.30); Newtown v Caerswe (2.30); TNS Llansantfried v Rhyladger (2.30); TNS

m. SMRRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE Premier Di-vision: Coleraine v Ballymena; Crusaders v Cilitonville; Glenavon v Portadovn; Linfield Ballyclare; Limavady v Dungannon Swifts.

HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE OF BRELAND

Prumier Division: Finn Harps v Sigo Rosers

(7.30); Shelbourne v Derry City (3.15).

RUGBY LEAGUE FRIENDLY MATCHES: Featherstone v Castleford (11 30); Leeds v Halifax (11.30).

RUGBY UNION ALLED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE-Leicester v Bedford (3.0); Richmond v Lon-don Irish (3.0).

don Irish (3.0). Hemison NATIONAL LEAGUE One: Birmingsam and Solinuli v Nottingsam (2.15); Harnogate What ledale (2.15); Mexhauy v Lydney (3.0); Otley v Moriey (2.15); League Thio North: Aspacra v Kendal (2.30). ANGLO-MELSH FRIENDLIES: North-ampton v Cardiff (3.0); Swonsea v Bach (2.30). ampton v Cardiff (3.0); Swansea v Bash (2.30).
WIELSH RAFTONAL LEAGUE Premier Diwhition (2.30 unless stated): Caerphilly v Newport: Ebbu Vale v Abermoor. Neath v Lianelly.
Porthypridd v Bridgend, First Division: Blackrecod v LWN (Cardiff resintate): Dunant v Tondu; Llandovery v Cross Keys: Pontypool v
Bornmaers, Rummey v South Wales Police, Iredegar v Merthyr: Treordby v Maesteg.
BANK OF SCOTLAND BORNER LEAGUE:
Cala v Merthos (2.0); Fawkt v Peebles (2.0).
Jed-Forest v Kelso (2.0).

BASKETBALL UNI-BALL TROPHY Group A: Mand Giants v Thames Valley Tigers (7 0).

ICE HOCKEY SEKONIDA SUPERLEAGUE: Nortingham Peruhers v Cardiff Devils (3.0); Sheffield Steet-ers v Manchester Storm (3.0); Newcastie Rwerkings v Ayr Scottish Eagles (6.30)

TOMORROW FOOTBALL

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE SCOTTISH LEAGUE SECOND DIVISION

RUGBY UNION ALLIED DURBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE-Harlequins v Sale (3.0): Newcastle v West Harriepool (3.0): Saracens v London Scotish (3.15): Wesps v Goucester (3.0). JENSON NATIONAL LEAGUE Two North-Harry Evidence of Test North-Harry Evidence (5.75)

ICE HOCKEY ANDA SUPERI EAGUE: Ay Scottsh Ea-y Notthigham Parithers (6.30); Brack-Bees v Shelfield Steelers (6.0); Cardiff

BASKETBALL

Thames Valley Tigers (5.0): Newcastle Eagles
v Worthing Bears (5.30): UNI-BALL TROPHY Group A: Shelfield Sharks v Manchester Giants (4.0).

MONDAY

FOOTBALL 3.0 unless stated; Pools coupon and other League matches only FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP Aston Villa v Sheffield Wednesday....

2 Chariron v Arsenal.. 3 Derby v Middlesbrough 4 Leicester v Blackburn (7.45)

NATIONWIDE POOTBALL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION 9 Barnsley v OPR 10 Bradford City v Tranmere 11 Bristol City v Swindon (12.0)

Burnley v Lincoln City

Polichester v Bristol Rovers (1.0)

Macclesfield v Blackpool

Manchester City v Stoke

Northampton v Fulham 28 Reading v Notts County 29 Wigan v Walsall..... be v Chesterfield

SECOND DIVISION

Darlington v Leyton Orient
Hardepool v Rochdale
Peterborough v Bnghton
Plymouth v Exeter
Rotherham v Hallfax (12.0)
Scarborough v Scunthorpe
Shrewsbury v Huil
Wansea v Barner FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

43 Barrow v Northwich 44 Dover v Kingstonan 45 Forest Green v Hereford 47 Hednesford v Doncaster

Caparros has been investing in the club this season - but he

Mayhem at Merthyr as money runs out

A DESPERATE financial predicament and a long-running struggle for ownership have combined to ensure that there has been little to celebrate this Christmas at Merthyr Tydfil Football Club.

The south Wales outfit, who have in the past enjoyed the fame and fortune of European competition, are in danger of going out of business. This week supporters of the aptly-nicknamed Martyrs interrupted their preparations for the festive holidays to try to raise money to

pay the players' wages. The fans have had to take such emergency action to ensure that tomorrow's Dr Martens League Premier Division match at Gloucester City goes ahead. Last weekend the players only travelled to fulfil their fixture at likeston Town after a whip-round among club officials came up with enough money to pay part of the previous week's wages.

Funds to cover the weekly wage bill of over £2,000 had not been provided by the club's owners, Charles Stanley, a Milton Keynes solicitor, and his wife Sharon. The Stanleys have been tangled up in a protracted takeover battle for much of this campaign with Eugene Caparros, a Bridgend hotelier.

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

BY RUPERT METCALF

has said he is not providing any more funds unless he gains control of the club from the Stanleys, whom he has threatened to sue to recover the £200,000 he claims he has invested in Merthyr since the summer.

Such has been the confusion at Penydarren Park that earlier this month the team effectively had two managers - one appointed by the Stanleys and one by Caparros. Colin Addison, the experi-

enced former Newport County. Hereford United and Derby County manager, was in charge in the summer but he was replaced at the start of the season by another former Newcort manager, John Lewis, who was appointed by the Stanleys. Earlier this month Caparros

launched his first, unsuccessful takeover bid, sacked Lewis and replaced him with Eddie May the director of football at the League of Wales club Haverfordwest County and a former Cardiff City manager. However, the Stanley camp

claimed that Caparros had no authority to hire and fire managers and re-instated Lewis who resigned within a week after the Stanleys had failed to

pay the players' wages. "I am finished with football," Lewis said at the time. "I feel I have been badly used and don't need all this hassle."

This week Merthyr sold the former Swansea City player. Shaun Chapple to Forest Green Rovers for a four-figure fee, which will help to pay the wages over the holiday period. Overall, the club is about £300,000 in debt.

May is apparently back in charge of the team while Caparros tries to complete his takeover, "I am not putting another penny into the club until I have ownership Caparros said this week. Meanwhile, Bob Phillips. a director of Cardiff City is acting as a mediator between the two sides in the takeover saga.

TRANSFERS

FULL TRANSFERS

FOLL TRANSPERS

Free transfers or undisclosed fees
unless stated

Staffen Freund (midfielder) Borussla Dorrmund (Ger) to Tottenham (£750,000);
Stefan Mos (goalkeeper) Borusso Dorrmund
(Ger) to Rangers (£700,000). Tong Rougher (Groward) Hibernian to Port Vale
(£175,000); Patrick Golleter (defender) Morsellies (£7) to Southampton (£150,000); Langers
(£40,000); Brisan Healy (midfielder) Morecambe to Kurquay Utd (£25,000). Anders
Jacobsen (defender) Start (Nor) to Shelfield
Utd.

LOANS/TRIALS

Brian Qualley (forward) West Bromwich Albon to Exeter City, Gerry Harrison (mid-ficider) Sunderland to Luton Youm; Anders Oper (forward) Flora Tallinn (Est) to Arse-nal (trial).

Curbishley aims to raise the spirits

Charlton Athletic's shoestring squad are hoping they can emerge from a bad spell of form. Glenn Moore talked to their manager

A TELETUBBY? A home computer? A Manchester United Aston Villa was a typical exaway kit? No, none of the usual Christmas stand-bys would do for Alan Curbishley this Yuletide. A new player or two would certainly come in handy but. more than anything, the Charlton manager says he wants 'a

After eight matches without a win, and five defeats on the spin, goodwill appears to be the only thing going Charlton's way and they badly need at least a point at Wimbledon this lunchtime. The same applies to the home game against resurgent Arsenal on Monday.

Their current position, two points off the relegation zone and very much among the stragglers, seems a long way away from the heady days of autumn when, as newly-promoted tyros, they put five past Southampton and gained draws at Highbury and Anfield. Curbishley's manager of the month award for August is gathering dust and, he admitted when we met at the club's spruce south-east London training ground, "it is hard to relax at the moment".

Llewellyn Charles Curbishley is the Premiership's third longest-serving manager having taken charge at Charlton. Gritt, in 1991. The present run is the worst in that period.

"When you go into the Premiership as a newly promoted side a bad run is on the cards somewhere," he said. "This, I hope, is ours and the sooner we get out of it the better."

On the positive side, though, this only makes the defeats more frustrating. Charlton are not "getting annihilated, we're not far away from what we did in the early part of the season. But we didn't give away such

at set-pieces are at the heart of Chariton's drift down the table. As so often for newly-promoted sides they can match others from box-to-box, the difference

Monday's home defeat to ample. At half-time Charlton had had seven goal attempts none were on target. Villa had had four, three of which required saving. The match also reflected another truism for struggling sides - bad luck. The game opened with a bizarre Villa goal deflected in off Richard Rufus, it ended with

Charlton hitting the bar twice. The late rally suggested team spirit was as good as Curbishley claimed following two 'clear-the-air' team meetings the previous week. It needs to be as Charlton are neither willing, nor able, to buy themselves out of trouble. After the financial crises of the eighties, and the years in exile at Selhurst Park and Upton Park, this is a club which takes the longterm view.

"We've been there," said Curbishley, "with no ground and everything else, and we'll not live beyond our means. I've been there when directors have written their own cheques out to keep things going. We've all worked so hard to get where we are we aren't going to jeopardise our future though a lot of clubs will and a lot of clubs have.

"Only five years ago we couldn't pay our way and were initially in tandem with Steve selling players to pay the wages, we never want to get back in that position. The last thing I want if we are unsuccessful is for them to come to me and say I've got to sell half the side. I don't think that is a lack of ambition, I think that is being sensible, perhaps not too many clubs now are being sen-

> The upshot of this is that Charlton (spending since promotion: £2.5m) are competing with the likes of Villa (£21m in that time). But Wimbledon have done it. "What they have done is incredible and I think people take what Joe Kinnear does for granted now," said Curbishley. "It's something we'll always look up to. But I do think it was easier to establish yourself

them [in 1986] - than it is now. The financial gap is so big between the divisions."

Neil Redfearn appears after his post-training shower to confirm this analysis. Last year he was at the heart of Barnsley's unsuccessful attempt to survive miership. Now he hopes for better fortune at Charlton having become their first - and only firm player in the summer.

"In this division it is vital you get the first goal," he said, "sides don't give you a chance, they are ruthless. If anything the standard is higher than last year, but we've not been getting drubbed. We're frustrated rather than despondent, we've let ourselves down at important times.

Redfearn's own form has about by injuries to Shaun Newportunities to get forward in the Monday and Redfearn responded with several shot.

Having been on the wrong end of six-and seven-goal defeats with Barnsley, Redfearn admitted: "Away from home you are better off playing it tight but at home you've got to open up and try to break teams down. You are bound to lose teams in this division, but at Barnsley after Christmas we decided we might as well try to

want to come to Oakwell." Sasa Ilic and Clive Mendonca. Mendonca, another casualty of the defensive emphasis, has

been patchy. He and Curbishley agree the change to a more defensive system, brought ton and John Robinson and a desire to stem the goalsagainst, have affected his opway he did for Barnsley. With the wide players returning Charlton were back to 4-4-2 on

stay up getting at people and giving them something to worry about, especially at home. For a while we beat everyone and teams did not

A return to form by Redfearn Curbishley, who also has to contend with the dips in performance by promotion heroes then - and we came up with been rested but Ilic, despite duce of one of the country's best they'll get in."



loyalty after all he's done and I've not thought about dropping him. But I have said if he is unable to pick his head up we will have to move on."

Israel playing for Yugoslavia on step up to the Premiership. As Wednesday but, if fit, will play the teenagers clattered past Christmas. "A lot of their friends sheet for a match as the team today with Curbishley pledging: after finishing training. Cur- have gone on holiday. Ive told coach was stuck in traffic and "I feel he deserves a little more bishley said: "One or two have them the only time we will be the club could not afford the been stifled this year because we came up. Paul Konchesky became our youngest ever player last year [at 16] but we brought Chris Powell in. They In the wings wait the pro- realise... if they're good enough

were resigned like all football folk, to the usual truncated able to do that is if I get the sack. fine. Incidents like that have Maybe they're sitting there at taught Curbishley, 41, a sense

home with fingers crossed." the struggling manager. But with his brother Bill, a manag-

Upton Park to hand in the team

hard they work," said Curbishley. "It's not all a bed of roses, no-one gives you anything That is much like the Pre-

miership. It is important for the game that newly-promoted, with a feel for their communiof perspective, as did a spell as ty, youth and the future, pros-That is the black humour of a roadie in the United States per. Their fans will not be the only ones hoping the Robins there is still optimism at The er of rock acts like the Who and have a merry Christmas, fol-Valley. It is not so long ago a Led Zeppelin. "You see how lowed by a happy New Year.

Klos completes Ibrox move

DAVID MURRAY, the Rangers ·hairman, hopes his club's goalkeeper, Stefan Klos, will be worth the wait.

Murray has revealed that the Ibrox club have waited since the summer to finalise the signing of the German custodian - a deal which was completed on Christmas Eve. Klos may make his Premier

League debut against St Johnstone today after sealing his £700,000 move from Borussia Dortmund. Murray said: "It is the longest transfer I've been involved in during my 10 years

Leeds

Arsenal

10 Newcastle

11 Leicester

13 Tottenham

14 Sheff Wed

15 Everton

16 Charlton

17 Coventry

18 Blackburn

19 Southampton

20 Nottm Forest

12 Derby

West Ham

Wimbledor

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

BY JAMIE MCCANDLISH

at the club. I shook Stefan's hand last summer and we agreed a deal. It was as simple as that. He has shown he is a man of his word and has shown his commitment to Rangers by making a contribution to the transfer fee. He is only 27 yet has a wealth of experience and we are delighted to welcome

Rangers' Dutch coach, Dick

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Advocaat, could drop the current No 1 Antti Niemi to make way for Klos, although Niemi was outstanding in the 3-2 win

against Hearts last weekend. Advocaat said: "We need two or three top keepers at this club. That is very important. But you will have to wait and see if Stefan plays. It is a difficult decision for me to make. However it is a squad game, not just about the 11 players on the field and I want people to be happy. If they are not then, they know what they can do." Rangers' other senior keeper is the

L F A Most recent on right Upcoming matches

LDDLW

IWLWW

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LLWDD

injured Frenchman, Lionel Charbonnier

Celtic, who travel to Dundee tomorrow, will be without Craig Burley. The midfielder was aiming to return after two months out because of a groin problem, only to suffer a breakdown in training. The match may also come too soon for both Jackie McNamara (knee) and Marc Rieper (ankle).

St Mirren have appointed Tom Hendrie as their new manager, after they agreed a compensation deal with Alloa. Hendrie, who brings his as-

Today Liverpool (H): Monday Derby (A); 9 Jan Aston Villa (H):16 Jan Leeds (A).

Today Newcastle (A); Blooday Vémbledon (H). 9 Ján Blackburn (A); 16 Jan Madlesbrough (H).

Reday Arseral (A): Monday Covertry (H): 10 Jam Wan Uto (A): 16 Jam Sheff Wed (H),

Roday Middlesbrough (Al; Mountay Newcasde (Al**): 9 Jan: Arsenal (Al): 16 Jan Southampton** (Al)

Taday Leeds (H): Monday Liverpool (A): 9 Jap Chelsea (H), 17 Jan Charlom (A),

Boday Everton (A): Wanday Michiesbrough (H): 9 Jan Wimbledon (A) 16 Jan Baddourn (H).

Today Coventry (A): Monday Evertan (H): 9 Jan Sheff Wed (A): 16 Jan Wimbledon (H).

Today Leicester (H): **Monday** Aston Villa (A); **9 Jan Totterham (H).16 Jan Wes**t Ham (A),

Today Derby (Hr. Monday Tomesham (A). 9 Jan Locester (H); 18 Jan Aston Villa (A).

Today Wimbledon (A), Monday Arsenal (H), 9 Jan Southampton (A):17 Jan Newcastle (H)

Today Toqenham (H): Monday West Ham (A): 9.1mm Norum Forest (H): 16 Jan Chelsex (A).

Today Aston Villa (H): Monday Lekester (A); 9 Jan Leeds (H), 16 Jan Derby (A)

Today Cheises (H): Monday Notum Forest (A). 9 Juni Charlton (H): 16 Jun Liverpool (A).

Today Man Utd (A): **Monday** Scuttampton (H) **9 Jan Coventry (A), 16 Jan** Arsenai (H).

DDIMW . Today Buckburn (A): Monday Snelf Wed (H): 9 Jan Middlesbrough (A). 18 Jan Evertan (H)

sistant John Coughlin with him from the Second Division club. has signed a two-and-a-half

year deal with the Paisley side. St Mirren turned their attention to Hendrie after admitting they were not in a financial position to make the former Hull City player-manager, Mark Hateley, an offer. Hendrie will take charge of

the First Division club for the first time today against Hamilton. He takes over at Love Street following the departure of the previous manager, Tony Fitzpatrick, earlier this month.

Football 'pricing kids out'

CHEAPER PREMIERSHIP football tickets for children are at the top of the Football Task Force's agenda this Christmas.

The Task Force found that 63 per cent of schoolchildren who responded to a survey about the game felt top-flight clubs sometimes price them out of attending matches. A Task Force spokeswoman,

Alison Pilling - who is also the new chairman of the Football Supporters' Association - believes children up and down the country will be unfairly denied a Christmas trip to see their favourite team over the next few days. "Our survey provides startling new evidence of the extent to which children are being shut out of our football grounds," she said. "The game must act now if it is to save the fans of the future." The Task Force plans to encourage a countrywide pricing structure based on what is currently the "best practice" among clubs.

COLIN TODD, the Bolton manager, believes that victory over third-placed Bradford City at the Reebok Stadium today would be a major incentive for his side in their quest to win his financially struggling

promotion back to the Pre-

miership.

The Bantams are just a point ahead of Wanderers and Todd recognises the importance of securing three points from the game against Paul Jewell's side. "It's a very, very good game for us to play at the moment," Todd said. "Bradford are doing very well right now and it's a fantastic opportunity for us to leapfrog them and move into the top three or at the very least go level."

Trevor Francis, the manager of one of the other promotion contenders, Birmingham City, hopes his team will carry on where they left off against Sunderiand last week when they take on Sheffield United today.

Francis was delighted with the way his team held firm against Sunderland. "All around the field the way that we played was very, very pleasing," Francis said. "The backing the supporters gave us was fantastic and hopefully we will be able to get the goals to reward them."

The Sunderland manager, Peter Reid, is boosted by the news that his captain, Kevin Ball, will be available for the trip to Tranmere after a foot injury.

Reid now believes that his team have a great chance of entering the Premiership. "It takes something very serious to keep Kevin Ball out of action," Reid said. "I thought he was absolutely outstanding at Birmingham, where he did a real

captain's job." Alan Ball is under no illu-

promotion challenge NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

Todd hopes to step up

BY IAN RODGERS

Portsmouth side face at secondplaced Ipswich, and he admits that financial worries have affected their recent perfor-

mances. "It has been very hard for the players to concentrate on playing when there are so many things going on off the pitch. Ball said. "Ipswich are without doubt a very good side in this division but we have to ap-

proach the game with the right attitude and commitment." Graham Taylor ends an emotional week watching his Watford side entertain Bristol City. Taylor only returned to the club on Tuesday after admitting that he nearly died from a serious throat infection five weeks previously. "I will remain working part-time until I get the all-

clear." Taylor said. Bruce Rioch is still a contented man as Norwich City remain comfortably placed in the play-off positions, ahead of the Carrow Road manager's return to Queen's Park Rangers.

"If you'd asked me back in August I'd have settled for fifth place in the table and 40 points on the board," said Rioch, who was assistant to Stewart Houston at Loftus Road. "The trick now is to keep it going."

Peter Jackson, the Huddersfield manager, is desperate for a little more consistency from his side for the game against Grimsby at the McAlpine Stadium to regain the momentum

of their promotion challenge. We are playing well one match then losing the next," some sort of run together but, having said that, we are only three points off third place."

Barnsley travel to Stockport hoping to forget about last week's 3-1 defeat at home to Swindon, which left their player-manager, John Hendr in no doubt who was to blame. "I'm very disappointed with the defence. They have to take some responsibility at times,"

Hendrie said Elsewhere Swindon Town aim to capitalise on that 3-1 win over Barnsley when Wolves visit the County Ground West Bromwich Albion will try to shake off the disappointment of last week's 2-0 home defeat by Tranmere with a victory over Port Vale.

Oxford United will try to put a run of three defeats behind them when Crystal Palace visit the Manor Ground. (7) ig Moore should return for Pausce after a hamstring injury. However, Attilio Lombardo's comeback is likely to be delayed.

The Football League, meanwhile, has suggested that clubs rearrange their fixtures on 27 March to avoid clashing with England's European Championship qualifying match against Poland. The League fears that attendances will be hit if games kick off at 3pm - the same time as England's tele-

vised match at Wembley. The Football Association and the police turned down requests from the League to move the kick-off of England's game to either 1pm or 6pm. The League has therefore written to all its clubs warning them about the fixture clash. It is now up to the clubs to rearrange their games for the Friday sions about the size of the task

Jackson said. "We need to put a different time on the Saturday."

ite Uliv 1:50

oxing Day guide to the Premiership



Middlesbrough v Liverpool

Last season: No fixture

BRYAN ROBSON should really be full of festive cheer as he welcomes Liverpool to fortress Riverside this afternoon. But although his Middlesbrough side - unbeaten in their last 11 league games, unbeaten at home for twice as many, and placed fourth in the table after last week's surprise 3-2 win at Old Trafford - seem to be sitting pretty, all Robson can talk about is avoiding relegation. Then again, he knows all too much about the subject and his cautious approach is possibly making his players more determined to

prove wrong those who'd written them off. "We need another 12 points and then we've got the 42 that we set out to get at the start of the season," Robson said this week.

By NICK HARRIS

got a long way to go to get up there with the likes of the Arsenals and Man Utds, but we feel that we're going the right way.

"If somebody had said to me that we were going to be a point behind Man Utd and above Arsenal at this stage of the season, I would have snapped their hands off at the start of

The win at Old Trafford was achieved without the presence of Paul Gascoigne (left), who was serving a one-match ban but he should return today. "That's a good boost for us, the way Gazza's been playing of late," Robson said. Gary Pallister is rated as having a bet-"We're still building at the club and we've still ter than 50-50 chance of recovering from a to come back and play in the top third of the

heel injury, but Robbie Mustoe is almost certain to miss out both today and on Monday at Derby because of a hamstring problem.

Steve McManaman has played himself back into contention for Liverpool but manager Gerard Houllier will not say whether he will games that McManaman has missed, and Houllier knows he can't do without the winger's talents. As the French manager will also not be able to call on his compatriot, recent midfield signing Jean-Michel Ferri (ankle), Macca's chances may have improved.

"The best present we could give our fans is to win the two games over Christmas," Houllier said. "If we do that we have a chance

table, which is very important. The team is better, playing with more confidence. At the moment I'm happy the team is working well and becoming more confident in its defensive abilities.

One player not lacking confidence should start today. The side have lost six of the nine be Michael Owen (right) and if nothing else, today's match will offer him - and Paul Gascoigne - another chance to demonstrate why (or why not) they have glittering England ca-

reers ahead of them.

MEDDLESBROUGH (from): Schwarzer, Festa, Cooper, Vickers, Pallister, Gordon, Musroe, Maddison, Gastoigne, Iownsend, Deane, Ricard, Beck, Liverprool, (from): James, Heggen, Carragher, Staunton, Babb, Bjornebye, Berger, Ince, Redknapp, McManaman, Owen, Fowler, Redle, Matteo, Friedel, Thompson, Kwarme, Matter, Leopharten. McAteer, Leonhardser





Arsenal v West Ham (12 noon)

ARSENAL ARE close to having a fully fit squad as they prepare to welcome the former Gunners Ian Wright and John Hartson back to Highbury for today's visit by the Hammers. Manager Arsène Wenger's injury problems have eased over recent weeks, and now Nigel Winterburn (hamstring) and Ray Parlour (ankle) could be ready to rejoin the squad after missing last Sunday's 3-1 win against Leeds. Captain Tony Adams is the only remaining long-term injury but even he is expected to be back in training soon and may make a return to the team early in the new

West Ham manager Harry Redknapp is likely to stick with Wright and Hartson - even though they have managed only one goal between them in the last seven games - today. Redknapp does not want to risk Paul Kitson, who has had a broken toe, though he could be push into the fray on Monday against Coventry if he has an injection. John Moncur returns after a

one-match ban but Neil Ruddock is still suspended.

ARSEMAL (from): Searman. Mannanger, Lukic, Dixon, Winterburn, Vivas. Keown, Bould, Mendez, Upson, Grimandi, Ljungberg, Pedit, Vieira, Overmars, Boa Morte, Parlour, Bergkamp. Anelka. Wreh.

WEST HAM (from): Hislop. Breacker, Dicks. Potts, Relier, Sinclair, Hartson, Lomas, Wright, Ferdinand, Moncur, Lazaridis, Lampard, Pearce, Forrest, Omoyini, Coyne, Berkovic, Margas.



Coventry v **Tottenham**

Last season: 4-0

COVENTRY MANAGER Gordon Strachan will field the side that drew with Derby last week as he looks to drag his struggling Sky Blues a few points clearer of the four sides below them. Noel Whelan and Darren Huckerby will be the strike partnership this afternoon, leaving new signing John Aloisi from Portsmouth on the bench. Strachan has revealed Darren Jackson's lack of confidence has kept the striker on the bench thus far at Highfield Road. "I know that our supporters must have been perplexed to see him on the substitutes' bench but I had no alternative, Strachan said. "It is a slow business building up self-esteem, but he tells me he is getting better every day. He enjoys it down here and he says we have a great bunch of players."

George Graham is likely to name an unchanged Spurs team for the trip to the Midlands. The injured trio of John Scales. Ramon Vega and Steffen Iversen are all making progress but are not yet able to return. Tottenham have won three of their last four league visits to Highfield Road although the other game, last season's visit, ended in a 4-0 defeat for the London side. COVENTRY (from): Hedman, Nilsson, Shaw, Williams, Edworthy, Telfer, McAllister, Boateng, Froggatt, Huckerby, Whelan, Soltvedt, Aloisi, Jackson, Boland, Breen, Daish, Shilton, Ogracovic.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): Walker, Carr, Catderwood, Nielsen, Fox, Ander-ron, Ferdinand, Armstrong, Edinburgh, Ginola, Wilson, Dominguez, Allen, Sinton, Japobell, Clemence, Young, Baardsen, Sociensions: None.



Referee: K Burge.

Everton v Derby

Last season: 1-2

WALTER SMITH has nearly a full Everton squad to pick from today. Back from suspension come Richard Dunne and Michael Ball, while Craig Short, Dave Watson, John Collins, John Oster, Ibrahima Bakayoko and Nicky Barmby are all clear of injury or illness. It means Smith will not have to patch up his squad with youth team players like Adam Farley, who sat on the bench for last week's 2-1 defeat by West Ham. It could also mean that Mickaël Madar will once again be consigned to the bench.

Derby's Croatian captain Igor Stimac could be back in contention for his club's Christmas matches. The Croatian has not played since the end of October and returned home to Split last week for treatment on an ankle injury. Manager Jim Smith will have to make a change for today's game because both leftbacks Tony Dorigo and Stefan Schnoor are injured. Robert Kozluk could play, having recovered from an ankle knock, and may operate at right wing-back, with the versatile Rory Delap moving to the left. Midfielder Lars Bohinen is suspended, Stefano Eranio has recovered from flu but now has a calf injury. EVERTON (from): Myhre, Cleland, Bilic, Marerazzi, Unsworth, Dacourt, son, Grant, Cadamarteri, Ward. Barmby, Collins. Branch, Madar, Short, Sin Matson, Osrer, Bakayoko. Dunne, Ball.

DEREY COUNTY (From): Poom, Prior, Carbonari, Laursen, Elliott, Kozluk, Pow-ell, Carsley, Eranlo, Delap, Sturridge, Wanchope, Harper, Houlr, Stimac, Christie, Hunt, Bridge-Wilkinson.



Man Utd v **Nottm Forest**

JAAP STAM and Dwight Yorke are both doubtful, despite good progress in training this week. It was thought they would be back to face the Premiership's bottom club, but manager Alex Ferguson said on Christmas Eve they are still struggling. Both missed Saturday's home defeat by Middlesbrough and Stam is suffering from an ankle injury, while Yorke has a groin problem. Ferguson said: "Jaap Stam and Dwight Yorke are very doubtful for Saturday and we're just going to have to assess that one." United are anxious to have both back and in particular Stam,

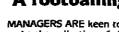
because his central defensive partner Gary Neville is suspended. Nottingham Forest have sent Jesper Mattsson home to Sweden for five weeks due to a badly bruised spleen, suffered in last Saturday's 2-2 draw with Blackburn. Alan Rogers is expected to be fit after being kept out of that game by a back injury. Nigel Quashie returns to the squad after a bout of flu but Dave Bassett's side will be without banned Pierre van Hooijdonk. Forest are looking look for their first win in 16 League games - a defeat or draw would equal the club and Premier League record.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): Schmeichel, Van der Gouw, Irwin, P Neullie, Brown.
Johnsen, Stam, Berg, Keane, Butt. Scholes, Beckham, Glggs, Blomqvist, Yorke, Cole,
Sheringham, Solskjær.

Preringnam, Solskjaer.

NOTTINGNAM FOREST (from): Beasant, Hjelde, Bonalair, Chettle, Mattsson, Armstrong, Rogers, Stone, Johnson, Quashle, Gemmili, Bart-Williams, Freedman, Shipped J. Harewood, Darcheville, Gray, Crossley.

MD Pensions: United: G Neville, Forest: Van Hoolidonk.



...And statistics

A footballing Christmas carol

MANAGERS ARE keen to set out their defensive stalls. They may even make the collection of clean sheets their No 1 priority. There are those that become Scrooge-like, bringing back everyone behind the ball, manto-man marking, meanly denying space. And when presented with the old adage of attack being the best form of defence, mutter "humbug!" and tighten their lines. Perhaps they should heed The Ghost of Football

Only once in six Premiership seasons has the side with the meanest defence won the championship, Manchester United in the inaugural season of 1992-93.

1992-93	Man Utd	31	Man Utd	31
1993-94	Arsenal	28	Man Utd	38
1994-95	Man Utd	28	Blackburn	39
1995-96	Arsenal	32	Man Utd	34
19 96-9 7	Arsenal	32	Man Utd	44
1997-98	Man Utd	26	Arsenal	33

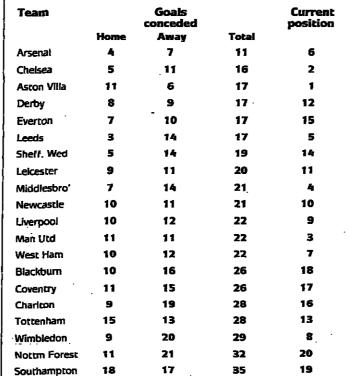
On three occasions the champions have let In at least a third more goals than the Premiership Scrooges. On three occasions it has been Arsenal playing the part of Scrooge. Last season, they reversed the roles with Manchester United, let in seven more goals - and edged the

Over the longer term, however, defensive attributes count for much. Thirteen clubs have played all the six completed Premiership seasons. Here are their total clean sheets out of their 240 games.

Total Premiership clean sheets

Man Utd	112
Arsenal	101
Blackburn	88
Leeds	87
Aston Villa	81
Liverpool	· 79
Everton	72
Chelsea	70
Coventry	70
Wimbledon	67
Tottenham	62
Shelf Wed	. 59
Southampton	54

Arsene Wenger, whose Arsenal side proved last year that being tight does not pay. In the year they won the Double, Manchester United stole their "meanest defence" title.



More immediately, any Premiership club tempted to become too Scrooge-like must heed...The Ghost of Football Present. With almost

half the current season gone, the most miserly defence is not ruling the

Statistics: Brian Sears/Nick Harris

Everton - who have let in 17 goals in their 18 games are as low as 15th in the Premiership while Wimbledon – with 29 goals conceded – are as high as eighth. Manchester United have let in as many as 22

goals but still are managing third.

Arsenal would seem to have reverted to type with their splendid defensive record being too Scrooge-like to allow goals going in at the other end. Fans at Highbury have only had to endure four opposition goals all season and at Elland Road it has been only three, in contrast at White Hart Lane and The Dell, Tottenham and Southampton have let in more goals at home than they have on their travels. That's true, too, of Villa to the extent of almost two goals at home for every one away – they have let in their last four home games. Not even clean sheets are proving a sure guarantee of success. Too often for some clubs

Keeping clean (number of 0-0s is			
9 clean sheets		5 clean sheets	
Everton	(6)	Charlton	(:
Arsenal	(5)	Liverpool	- (
8 clean sheets		Man Utd	(
Leeds	(4)	Leicester	(
West Ham	(4)	Tottenham	(
Aston Villa	(3)	4 clean sheets	
	,	Wimbledon	- {
6 clean sheets	453	2 dans chasse	•
Blackburn	(3)	3 clean sheets	
Chelsea	(3)	Coventry	(1
Derby Newcastle	(3) (3)	2 clean sheets	
Sheff Wed	(2)	Nottm Forest	- (1
Middlesbrough	(1)	Southampton	(1

Statistics can help us no further. In the story, Ebenezer Scrooge was transformed, and if anyone knew how to celebrate Christmas It was he. May that be said of all in football - from the most miserly defender to the most prolific goalscorer.

EVENING GAME (KICK-OFF 6.0)



Blackburn v Aston Villa Last season: 5-0

manager Brian Kidd with a selection headache today after recovering from a hamstring injury. The Scottish striker's hopes of renewing his partnership with Chris Sutton, which last year brought 41 goals, are far from guaranteed as Kidd would find it difficult to leave out Nathan Blake after the former Bolton striker's two goals as Rovers came back from 2-0 down to draw at Nottingham Forest last weekend. Gallacher may have to make do with a place on the bench - which could even leave record £7.25m signing Kevin Davies with no part to play at all. Keith Gillespie

KEVIN GALLACHER could present new is competing with fellow Irishman Damien Johnson for the wide-right position while Jason Wilcox seems certain to frustrate Damien Duff's hopes of returning on the opposite wing. Central defender Darren Peacock is another likely to be named among the subs with Kidd keeping faith with the Stephane Henchoz-Christian Dailly partnership at the heart of defence.

Aston Villa's central defender Gareth Barry could be recalled today. The England Under-21 international was left out of Villa's 1-0 win at Charlton on Monday, but Villa manager John Gregory could start the match with three central defenders against

Rovers. Recalling Barry would also leave Gregory with the dilemma of who to leave out of his attack with Stan Collymore and Julian Joachim vying to join Dion Dublin up front. Paul Merson is still struggling with a back injury that looks certain to keep him out of the Bank Holiday game against Sheffield Wednesday on Monday, BLACKBURN (from): Filan, Kerna, Henchoz, Daily, David-son, Gillespie, Sherwood, McKinlay, Wilkon, Sutton, Blake, Johnson, Duff, Davies, Peacock, Fettis, Gallacher, Perez.

ASTON VILLA (from): Oakes. Watson, Ehiogu. South-gate, Barry, Wright, Thompson, Taylor, Hendne, Joachim, Dublin, Collymore, Scimeca, Grayson, Vassell, Charles, Rachel.



Newcastle v Leeds



NEWCASTLE STRIKERS Alan Shearer and Duncan Ferguson stand a good chance of being fit enough to link up for the first time today. Shearer has suffered no negative reaction to his 35 minutes of action as a substitute during the 1-0 victory over Leicester last Saturday, while Ferguson (heavy flu) is back in training and expected to be in contention for this afternoon.

Leeds manager David O'Leary heads to Newcastle with injury problems that are threatening to undermine the club's season. Centre-back Robert Molenaar has been ruled out until May or later with cruciate ligament damage, less than a month after fellow defender Martin Hiden suffered the same injury. Leeds' influential captain Lucas Radebe is also out with a twisted knee. There may be a return to St James' Park for midfielder David Batty just two weeks after his £4.4m move to Elland Road. He sustained a cracked rib during his second debut for Leeds but trained on Thursday and said: "I never want to miss any match, and this one is a bit special. In the end it will be down to me

to decide whether I'm fit enough to play."

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): Given, Harper, Barron, Charver, Howey, Dabizas, Hughes, Lee, Speed, Glass, Georgiadis, Solano, Hamann, Shearer, Ferguson, Andersson, Kersbaia.

LEEDS (INITED (from): Martyn, Hasland, Wetherall, Wijnhard, Hasselbaink, Ribeiro, Bowyer, Hopkun, Gramville, Halle, Kewell, Harte, Woodgate, McPhall, Smith, Jackson, Robinson.



Sheff Wed v Leicester

Last season: 1-0



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY'S Danny Wilson will be without both his Italian strikers today. Paolo di Canio was expected to return from an 11-match suspension following his push on referee Paul Alcock, but is now AWOL in Italy, and in dispute with the Owls after they suspended him for two weeks without pay. Compatriot Benito Carbone is suspended. "Paolo has a decision to make but I don't know what that's going to be," Wilson said. "Whether he plays [ever again] for Sheffield Wednesday or not, I don't know. We will have to wait and see. It's a situation we could do without, but we are in it, so we just have to get on with it.

Martin O'Neill is trying to cope with a flu epidemic among his Leicester players. O' Neill is waiting on the fitness of midfielders Muzzy Izzet and Neil Lennon, who are both suffering from the bug and have not trained all week. Veteran defender Steve Walsh will return to the side after missing last weekend's defeat at Newcastle through illness but Tony Cottee is fit to play. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): Srnicek, Atherton, Jonk, Walker, Booth, Hyde. Sanetti, Cobian, Humphreys, Briscoe, Hinchcliffe, Sedioski, Emerson, Magilton, Rudi, Sonner, Alexandersson, Clarke,

LEKCESTER CTTY (from): Keller. Arphexad, Wolsh, Sinclair, Taggart, Guppy, Ullathorne Elliott, Savage, Lemon, Izzet, Impey, Zagorakis, Kaamark, Heskey, Cottee, Wilson ons: Wednesday: Carbone.



Southampton v Chelsea (12 noon)

Last season; 1-0



SOUTHAMPTON COMPLETED the signing of French full-back Patrick Colleter from Marseilles on Christmas Eve and he might go straight into the side to face Chelsea today. The 33-year-old impressed Saints manager Dave Jones during a trial period and could boost an otherwise depleted team. Old Blues boy Mark Hughes will not be able to face his old club as he is suspended for two matches. Jones had 16 senior players unavailable last weekend as his side hauled themselves off the foot of the Premiership with a third win of the season over Wimbledon. Stuart Ripley, Matthew Oakley, Jason Dodd and Ken Monkou are all now close to full fitness. Francis Benali, Scott Marshall. John Beresford, Dave Hirst and David Howells are all still missing and young defender Gary Monk, who stood in for Monkou, is also suspended.

Gianluca Vialli welcomes Marcel Desailly back into his Chelsea squad. Bernard Lambourde is also expected to be fit while Gustavo Poyet was due rejoin his team-mates on Christmas Eve after playing for Uruguay in Spain. Dennis Wise and Roberto di Matteo are suspended, so youth-team captain John Terry and Andy Myers are both added to the squad. SOUTHAMPTON (from): Jones, Hiley, Lundekvam, Monkou, Bridge, Palmer, Kachloul, Oakley, Le Tissier, Beartle, Ostensrad, Dodd. Ropley, Warner, Stensgaard, Basham, Dryden, Williams.

CHELSEA (from): De Goey, Petrescu, Babayaro, Leboeuf, Poyet, Vialli, Duberry, Ferrer, Lambourde, Zola, Morris, Goldbaek, Plo, Hitchcock, Nicholls, Terry, Desail-

ons: Southampton: M Hughes, Monk. Chelsea: Wise. Di Marreo.



Wimbledon v Chariton (12 noon)



WIMBLEDON' JOE KINNEAR has the chance to recall six-goal striker Jason Euell today. The England Under-21 international was banned for last week's 3-1 defeat at Southampton, Michael Hughes is holding off a double hernia operation until the end of the season so Kinnear has a full-strength squad to select from

Paul Mortimer is out of both Chariton's Christmas fixtures with the ankle injury that forced him to miss the last two games. The midfielder picked up the knock in the game against Blackburn on 5 December and, although X-rays revealed no break. he has been unable to train since. Eddie Youds is available again after suspension for the short trip to Selhurst Park but manager Alan Curbishley is still without several players. Mark Bright, Kevin Lisbie, Anthony Barness, Matt Holmes and Mark Bowen are still all out with injury and Curbishley may be forced to give debuts to youngsters Scott Parker and Paul Konchesky. WIMBLEDON (from): Sullivan, Curningham, Kimble, Perry, Blackwell, Thatche C Hughes, Earle, Ekoku, Roberts, Gayle, Ardley, Leaburn, M Hughes, Kenneck, Epell, Jupp, Cort, Alnsworth, Fear, Castiedine.

CHARLTON ATHLETIC (from): Ilic, Petterson, Mills, Powell, Tiler, Redfearn, Youds, Rufus, Kneella, Robinson, Newton, Hunt, Mendonca, Brown, S Jones, K Jones, Parker, Royce, Konchesky



CURBISHLEY'S FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL P28 • HENMAN AIMS FOR TOP P20

Teeton Mill aiming to give punters another grey day at Kempton Park



Teeton Mill, one of the leading contenders for today's King George VI Chase at Kempton Park, walks back to his stables after morning exercise at his Herefordshire stables near Ross-on-Wye. Teeton Mill is hoping to follow in the tradition of Desert Orchid and One Man. two other grey horses to enjoy success in the King George VI Chase

Peter Jay

Villa aim to take revenge

ON WHAT is arguably the most "English" day in the football calendar, when huge crowds revel in the holly and the rivalry in a manner alien to continental Europe, the most English of championship challengers

have a score to settle. The score in question is the 5-0 drubbing which Aston Villa. the home-grown Premiership leaders, suffered at Blackburn in their first away fixture of 1998. Their last, which takes them back to Ewood Park as the campaign reaches the halfway point, is one of those endof-year occasions for reflecting off long before the bell. The secupon how rapidly things can

At the time of the January meeting, a Blackburn side under Roy Hodgson's managership held second place as opposed to today's 18th. Villa's

FOOTBALL

BY PHIL SHAW

by a spitting incident involving Savo Milosevic, saw them slip to 12th position and led Brian Little to offer the resignation that was accepted a month

Now in the respective charge of Brian Kidd and John Gregory, the clubs reconvene with vastly different agendas. When Villa trailed Arsenal 2-0. they resembled the pacesetting distance runner who is burned ond wind that brought victory that day and another at Charlton have gone a long way towards convincing the sceptics that they have the capacity to

stay the distance. Blackburn are unbeaten in embarrassment, exacerbated three games since Kidd's apmer employers. To tilt the

group of five who are in danger of being cut adrift at the bottom. The appearance of Dion Dublin, who spurned Rovers in favour of Villa, is likely to generate enough hot air to supply Branson's balloon. Keith Gillespie, on whose crosses he would have thrived, makes his home

The late kick-off at Ewood means that Chelsea, who occupied the summit for two days until Monday night, are likely to return there for at least three hours should they win at another of the queasy quintet,

Southampton. The Saints produced their best display of the season against Wimbledon last weekend, but the suspension of Mark Hughes deprives them of a striker who always excels against for-

pointment yet remain in a balance further towards voke calls for a stewards' in-Chelsea, who are now unbeaten in 17 Premiership games, Marcel Desailly is in line to return. as might Graeme Le Saux.

With the top two both away, Manchester United will view the visit of the bottom club, Nottingham Forest, as a chance to regain ground lost in the home defeat by Middlesbrough. United know from bitter experience the folly of projecting ahead from the Boxing Day po-

Exactly 12 months ago they had collected 46 of a possible 60 points after a sixth successive win. In their next game, United led Coventry with four minutes left, only for collective complacency to cost them all three points. Arsenal, it transpired, sensed that day all was not lost.

A Forest victory would pro-

quiry. Dave Bassett's side could not stop United's second string in the Worthington Cup, and only a shock to match any this season will prevent their equalling a club record of 16

League matches without a win. Middlesbrough's success, which has put them in fourth place just 18 months after they plunged into the First Division, has been as refreshing and unexpected as Villa's ascendancy. To add the scalp of Liverpool to that of United, albeit an emasculated version compared with Anfield's finest, could tempt Teesside into de-

claring UDI. However, as Villa discovered to their cost, Liverpool's he served until this month. form fluctuates wildly. The return of Paul Gascoigne, whose renaissance proves that abstinence makes the heart grow partnership, the visitors might the drop.

Boro need to counter Michael Owen and Robbie Fowler, es- cas Radebe or Robert Molepecially if Gary Pallister fails a fitness test.

Arsenal's followers, having greeted George Graham and David O'Leary with varying degrees of warmth lately, welcome another Highbury legend "home" when Ian Wright steps out with West Ham, This time last year the eventual Double winners stood fifth compared with sixth this morning, 13 points off the pace. Tonight they could be as few as four behind.

Another man going back is David Batty, whose recovery from cracked ribs may enable him to face Newcastle, the club But, with Duncan Ferguson and Alan Shearer primed to launch a potentially fearsome

fonder, may not be quite what have chosen to have either of the stricken centre-backs, Lunaar, fit instead.

Flying in from Norway, like some on-loan Santa, the Molde goalkeeper Morten Bakke goes straight on to Wimbledon's bench as cover for the increasingly excellent Neil Sullivan at home to free-falling Chariton, a meeting of Selburst Park's reluctant tenants, past and present.

Coventry's recent record against Tottenham is as good as it was against Leeds during George Graham's time there. Spurs' position in the lower echelons does not reflect their resurgent form under new management, so the outcome at Highfield Road could have a significance beyond the Sky Blues' customary bid to beat

Golding 'treats' provide comfort and joy

Festivities at sea include flannel bath cup of wine and a telephone call. By Stuart Alexander

IKE ALL good sons not able to spend Christmas Day with their family Mike Golding phoned home yesterday. His nearest and dearest had gathered at the family home in the Oxfordshire village of Dorchester and Goldng wished them a merry Christmas.

However, once all the pleasantries had been exchange his grandmother had a question to ask. "When is Michael going to get a proper job?" she said.

For the moment Golding's "proper job" is single-handed ocean racing and the British sailor made his call yesterday as is becoming the custom for one of Britain's leading long disother side of the world.

He is taking part in the Around Alone Race and yesterday his 60ft Team Group 4 boat was sailing south-west of Tasmania, still with a difficult ! 1,500 miles to run to the finish of the second leg of the race

from Cape Town to Auckland. This is Golding's fourth circumnavigation since 1992-93, and all four have seen him at sea for Christmas. Not that he lets the day pass by like any other. His Christmas treats to himself vesterday included a complete flannel bath followed by lunch of cured ham and crackers, washed down with a cup of wine, rounded off by a miniature. Christmas cake from Harrods.

Golding started this 6,800nile leg as overall leader, but by only two and a half hours from France's Isabelle Autissier. Now she has again been hit by gear problems and is heading for Tasmania for repairs, which will give Golding

valuable breathing space. But he is being chased by Autissier's compatriot, Marc Theircelin, over whom Goldie had a 12-hour advantage in the bank when they left Cape Town. Both of them had been caught between two weather systems



Mike Golding takes time out to open Christmas presents on board his yacht in the Tasman Sea

which had allowed the second leg leader, Giovanni Soldini of Italy, to stretch away by nearly 300 miles.

But yesterday Golding thought he had escaped into better breeze ahead of Thiercelin and opened up a 50-mile gap. "So I plan to enjoy Christmas when

I get to New Zealand," he said. Golding is not under pressure to try and close down Soldini because he had a five-day advantage from the first leg, but he expects to reduce the deficit over the last 1,500 miles. But, while he is now out of the danger zone as far as being rescued in the southern ocean is concerned, there are problems ahead. "There is a low forming up north which could give me a really bad headwind," he said. "These boats don't like those conditions and I have aiready suffered shedloads of minor damage." Going the other way. the fleet was assembling in Sydney for this morning's start of the classic 600-miler to Hebart, hoping that Golding's weather does not leave them with a lot of mess to sort out.

THE SATURDAY CROSSWORD



Thursday's solution

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Last Saturday's solution MOTORCAR MAHLER U O O A M A D RUMBLA GRANULLAR MANUMBLE U C N MANUMBLE U C N

M S U C N
MANINTHESTREET
N N L A R
DETAIL WRAITH
A N N A Y
GONGERTPTANIST
G R S T
SANITARY HESSE
Y G U O E A R
GOULIN UNDERLIP
N E T T K A

ACROSS

A reportedly consider-able fling (6) Make up short redundancy pay with increase

Odd delays round East for Boxing Day viewers in Asia? :6,4) 10 Ship's non-nuclear escort (4)

11 Reach packed with angler's ultimate catch (8) 12 Upset table (3,3) 13 Case that is sent back,

Boxing Day? (4) 15 Pine's stylish for this 18 A risk's involved with wet sporting item (5-3) 19 Regret Boxing Day is

raw (4)

Rule out Boxing Day? According to reformer 23 Adult, before being active and holding service,

is robing (8) 25 Old king, one at end of rank (4) 26 Insists on carpets I put

28 Country copper's Boxing

DOWN 2 Book yielding fine mis-

cellany (5) At last it's Boxing Day! (5.4)Spoke with artist on obone (6)

Keen on horse for Boxing Day, one showing definite development? Wasted time going after

female writer (8) 7 Check root springing up 8 Cooked for Sunday? Overworked, Boxing Day? (4-5) 14 Bit of a storm's brewed

16 Subsidence, including

hour's erosion (9) 17 Coffee mill found in Spain, note (8) 20 Incomplete relief, Boxing Day, for some at

22 This chap on Boxing Day will be hung over

24 Entente initially present in cordial relation (5)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday, Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4018. The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners will be adnounced in January.

Ward unhappy with Rovers' wage offer

ASHLEY WARD'S £4.5m move to BY ALAN NIXON Blackburn Rovers is in danger of collapsing over his personal demands.

The big striker has been discussing terms with Rovers for the past 48 hours, after Barnsley finally consented to the sale. However Ward and his advisors, the Professional Footballers' Association, have been unable to agree on his salary at Blackburn, and Brian Kidd's planned capture could be off.

Ward is looking for around £1m per year, but Blackburn's offer falls well short of that figure. They are thinking in terms of £650,000 per year. Rovers' owner, Jack Walker, has a pay ceiling and no one is allowed to earn more than £1m at Blackburn, Only Chris Sutton comes close to that figure.

latest contract and know the pay scale he is on. Ward will not sell himself short and could now go to another club. Leeds,

Leicester, Sheffield Wednes-

day and even Ward's old club Derby County are in the hunt. Tottenham Hotspur have completed the signing of the German international midfielder, Steffen Freund, from Borussia Dortmund, according to German sources.

Borussia have confirmed that Freund had signed for Sours in a deal which is thought to be worth £750,000, with the player signing a contract until 2003. The Spurs manager, George Graham, and his director of football David Pleat held talks with the 28-year-old Freund at White Hart Lane on Tuesday.

Newcastle have pulled out of a £5,2m deal to bring the Milan The PFA negotiated Sutton's winger, Ibrahim Ba, to St James' Park after the Frenchman failed a medical. The 25year-old international was on Tyneside on Wednesday after the end of the season.

stringent tests revealed a longstanding knee injury and scuppered the prospective move. Southampton have com-

the two clubs agreed terms, but

pleted the signing of the French full-back, Patrick Colleter, from Marseilles. The 33-year-old's transfer is expected to cost the Saints around £150,000. Sheffield United have signed

the Norwegian centre-back. Anders Jacobsen, from Start for a nominal fee. The Blades completed the five-month deal for the 30-year-old on Christmas Eve, after being held up by paperwork

The Blades' manager, Steve Bruce, will not include Jacobsen in his plans for today's fixture at Birmingham City. Bruce said: "The Norwegian season finished five weeks ago - it would be wrong to pitch him in straight away. He's a big, typically English type of centre-half, and we'll see how he goes until

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WEEKENDREWE

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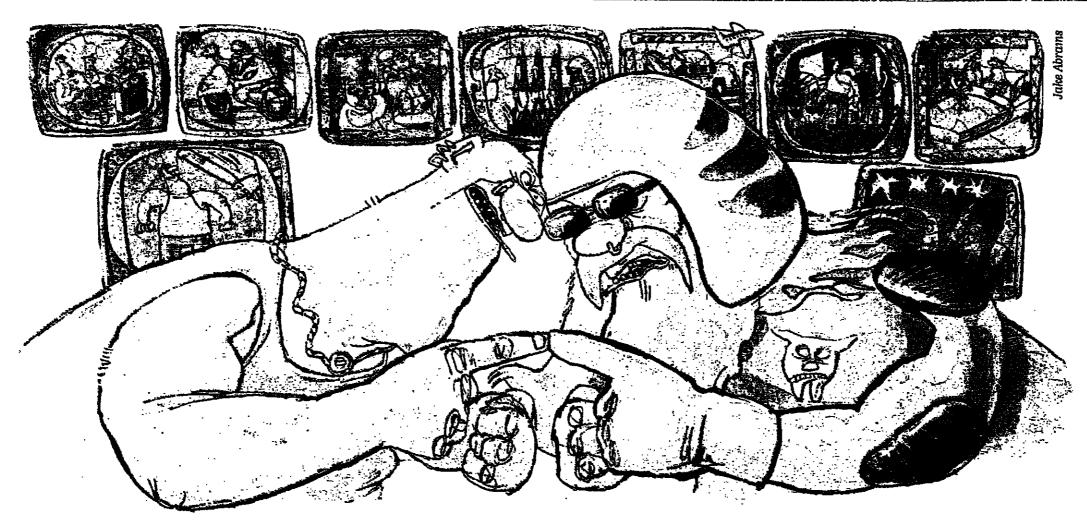


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WHERE TO GO
TO GET AWAY
IN 1999



Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyght

BY MARTIN NEWELL

The Kyng's crewe chilled at Camelot that Krystmas with many tasty geezerez, gotte up in good geare blokes with a reppe, well-rayted in a rukke. People who culde partie with a vengeance The do went onne for dayes and dayes Arthur's burde mucked-out the place some mornynges Emptied ashetrays, clered out cack and cannes Hoovered-up the roachez and the rubishe Come midday it all went raydeo rentals agayne For they were as a Millwalle posse bygge style All of themme on Stella beere and shortes all daye.

Laddes drunkke and stinkeing Loades of booz and scoffe Everybody thinkking Somethynge myghte go off

New Yere had hardely hitte home
When Arthur telefonede for a Thai Takeaway
Loude cryed the laddes for more lagere
Arthur shoutede: "Shutte itte – the sprogges are sleepen.
Queene Brenda has gotte the arseayke over this
She must go to B&Q fyrste thynge for the Sayles.
Sir Gary, see if there's any signe of that scranne yet."
But scarcely had Sir Gary got to garden gayte
When a bigge bastarde on a byke burste inne
Strayght up the halle, oil on the Axminstere
Queen Brenda's Ykea lampe lyeing flatte.
No kydingge. This was a honey-monstre.
Grene leather, grene leggynges, grene skid-lidde.
Afnes lyke legges. Legges lyke tuggebotes.
Bigge bushey beard down to his belte buckle.
Strayght uppe.

On his bakke a Death's hedde Manneres very rude And thenne Sir Gavin said: "Yow fond of hospital foode?"

The verdant knyght gayve it summe verbal:
"Who's the guv'nor? You bunche of hayre-dressers."
The Kyng was not beste pleased about this
And lookked about for backuppe from the laddes.
But nobody wantez a rukke bifore the nosebagge arrives
You ever tried Thai Takeaway wythe brokken teethe?
"Anybodye wante summe?" Asked the Grene Byker
"I thought you was supposed to be a harde crewe."

You culde see Arthur was just about to lose itte
Quietly spoke Sir Gawayne: "Outsyde. Right nowe."
Arthur said: "No leave itte Wayne." but too layte.
This almyghty boundle beganne wythe the berque.
Wayne wellied the wlonke with a wheel brayce,
Dogges barkeing. Nayghbour's lyghts come on. The lotte.
Thence came the Fylthe. Blues and twos. Wyth back-uppe.
The Grene Knight — and full credite to hymme — told the Fylthe
Itte was a misonderstanding. So offe they trottede.
Thenne he turned hym rounde to Gawayne and sayde:
"You! Returne matche. Yeare's tyme. My turfe. Be there.
Or else."

Helmet nowe wyth dente Bloode on daygloe veste Offe the toeragge roared Somewhere to the weste.

Gawayne slinges his Benne Shermanne in the Zannussi Breakes open a Becks and belches lyke a bastarde. "Thisse is welle bloddie seryious—I'm goner nede a motore." Kyng Arthur said it would be sortede. Saye no more. Wynter draggede onne thene Springe and the FA Grail Millwalle didn't gette a lookke in they waz robbede. So the entyre crewe, Arthur, Sir Gawayne, Sir Daerrenn Sir Warrene, Sir Lee, Sir Shaun, Sir Kevin of New Crosse And alle the othere Johns flewe to Ibeetha for a fortnyght's furme. Muche drynkeing, fyghteing and horizontel joggeing was theyr Then after, was deportayscheon and some payeing of fynes. Soone cayme Autumne and thenne soddynge Wynter agayne. Wayne, his yeare near uppe, must taconne thyss tossere. The laddes had a whippe-rounde bifore-hande. Gawayne was gotte in ordere by the boyse. Eighteen-hole Dokke Martyn's, dodgey Mayce gasse Combatte kecques, welle-sharpenede Stanleye Knyve Numbere two croppe, Crombie, Fforde Cyortina. The cattles knackeres! For he was welle-toolede uppe. "Putte the bastarde oute of businez!" Cryed the Kyng. "Itte's welle in hande. The gytte's gotte it comeing." Calles backe Gawayne.

The trippe to the northewest as bade as it could be Contraflowe, roadeworks and a smacke-up by Stoke Gawayne, as it goes, endeing up neare Northe Wayles Hitle was Krystmas Eve and he was cremecraquered. By stroke of lucke, Gawayne mette anothere mayte, Bertilak, who ran a garage wyth knyghtclubbe tacked onne. Well apointede, as it happened. Usede to runne wyth Arthur.

What a gaffe! Coquetayle barre, Faery lyghts. Opticces
Raised acryliq sheepeskinne dais, smokede glasse tabil.
Waterebedde. And thys was juste the gueste bedroom.
"Staye here as longe as you lyke Wayne," said Bertilak.
"I knowe the mushe you're aftere. A ryghte yaa-hoo.
He lives notte two myles from here. Helpe yourselven.
Drynkes — whatevere. My lady Lynnette will looke after you."
Gawayne culden't believe it and gratefule he gaspes.
"Toppe geezere!"

Krystmas was kepte in a blur of beere and Bacardie Gawayne laye in bedde layte lookeing at Loadede Many a lockke-in he hadde in Bertilak's barre Drynking. He gotte completeley Schindleres Liste Thenne three dayes bifore the bygge battle, Bertilak sayed, "Oute of Bacardie. I've gotte to go to Cashe and Caerrie. I'll be back layter. Mynde the missus for me." That mornynge, Lynette came into Gawayne's chamber A handsome tarte, feisty and fitte-lookeing. She was tryeing it onne but Gawayne kepede coole. Whene Bertilak was back he said, "Awryght thenne?" "Sweet as," sayes Wayne. "Sweet as." Bertilak bunges Gawayne a bottele of Bacardie "Toppe man. Give it summe lewinski thenne." Welle goode.

Come the nexte daye, Bertilak drove to Droitwich
To see a manne about the manifolde on his motore.
Same drille. Chille oute dude. Helpen yourselve.
Gawayne was waykened wyth a wet tongue in hys eare
"Leave it oute Lynette. Yow are Bertilak's beste burde."
By eveneing, Bertilak is backe wyth hys wafty Y-Reg
"Anythynge happened lyke?" He looked at Lynette.
Gawayne buttoned itte, notte wysheing to saye nuthinne.
Bertilak bunges hym a bare of Beckes beere.
"Sortede thenne."

The thyrd daye, Bertilak beckons Gawayne, going.

"I've got a little tyckle going offe with some tomfoolery.
Looke aftere Lynette – there'll be a longe drynk layter."
Gawayne is abed whenne Lynette comes inne
Ful beautifulle, hayre falleing downe, wonderebra
Legges withoute ende ande some craftie contryvance
Begot fromme Janetreger, crotcheles camiknickeres
Thiss was almoste too muche. Gawayne was gaggeing
But by prayer to St Clintaune he kept his wingknut onne.
He beggede one thyngg from hys mayte's missus:
Batteryes for his Gaymeboye, flatte synce Boxeing daye.

Thys she gives him ande he setles for a snogge.
Wythe no rumtie-tumtie. For thatte was ryght oute.
Thenne Bertilak poppes inne and poures a Pernod
He gives Gawayne a gold signet ringe for good lucke.
Lynette lowngeing blissede oute to Teddie Penderegrasse
"Worde in your shell-lyke Wayne. Did she trye it onne?"
"No chaunce."

Nowe dawnede the daye of the returne rukke Gawayne got into gears, wobbile but welle uppe for itte. A myle uppe the roade he sees a signe sayeing Private Dryve Keep Oute. Bye nove he's brickyng itte. The Grene Knyght's garage was huge — a hoogstraaten. Heareing bangeing from wythinne, he warnes: "Come over here iffe yow thynk you're harde enough." "You slagge." The grebo was giving it alle of thatte. "Botteled oute? Yow, snowedroppe!" Goes Gawayne. This was takeing the pysse for the Grene Knyght He swunge at Gawayne's baunce with bayseball battle. Twyce more he twattede hym. Wayne woulden't go downe Whene Wayne mayced hym, it seemed to slove hym uppe Butte backe he came with a kicke to the cryckette sette. Whych causede Wayne's eyes to welle watere Hade enoughe have yow? Had enoughe yow bastarde? Gawayne gritted his teethe. "Do you tayke Swytch?" They backkede off.

The Grene Knyght tooke his helmet off his heade Underneathe itte was Bertilak, Gawayne's host. Got uppe tyke a grebo - the fulle maunty. Gawayne, gobbesmackede atte being setuppe Kickede atte hys Cyortina doore, sweareing stille. Bertilak said: "This wasn't dowen to me, Wayne The Kyng had heared it said you was alle mouthe He wantede to see howe you cayme uppe in the washe But since you're sounde, we'll calle thys a rezulte." Wythe thatte, the Grene Knyght shinge a can of Stella At Wayne who stashede his Stanleye Knyve awaye Thence aftere they repairede to Gabriella's A nearbye knyghtclubbe knowne for lappedauncing Whereupone theye gayve the shortes a severe caneing Resulteing in a rukke wythe seven bounceres And anothere runne-in wyth the localle Bylle Baled oute by Lynette onn Mondaye mornynge Stille singeing "No one lykes us. We don'te coure." As itte goes.

The Ende

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REVIEW



Blue Tigers: a short story by Jorge Luis Borges. Published in Britain for the first time



A brief history of time: why our clocks have become too accurate

CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT



Don't miss the famous Christmas card quiz

REAL LIFE

Your year ahead with the stars

PLUS

Labour: it can only get worse, by Siôn Simon



Dressing the Cathedral No 5: The baby Jesus (£5.99 from the toy shop over the road) lies in his crib in Ely cathedral's Nativity scene

Brian Harris

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Taming tyrants

Sir. As a humanitarian, I feel obliged to assist David Aaronovitch in finding a nonmilitary solution to the Iraq crisis ("Unfortunately, there really was no alternative to bombing Iraq", 22 December).

During the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, Ayatollah Khomeni needed to be "kept in his cage" with not a whimper from the British or the Americans when Iraq invaded its neighbour, and used chemical weapons against Iran.

Now it seems that recently Saddam Hussein has become a brutal dictator. The Anglo-American definition of a ruthless dictator is one who no longer falls into line with

There is another state within the region which has defied the will of the international community. This state continues to threaten its neighbours, indeed has illegally occupied the territories of not one but three countries. It has abused the rights of citizens living under its rule and has been a serial breaker of promises in the peace process. It has amassed a stockpile of nuclear weapons and refuses to sign up to the nuclear non-proliferation

treaty. This state is Israel. Saddam Hussein is a tyrant. He should be made to comply with Security Council resolutions and should be prevented from acquiring horrific weaponry. Israel must also be made to comply to UN resolutions. It must also be

open to weapons inspections. There are over 1 billion Muslims in the world. Islam is the fastest growing religion, with an increasing political

influence in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet republics.

The leaders of the Arab countries represent a failed nationalist ideology. The leaders of the Western world . would do well to realise that the kings and self-appointed presidents in the Arab world will not remain in power for long. A bitter and resentful Islamic world, suspicious of the West and the United Nations, is the last thing that Britain and America would wish to create. We are, I fear, fast approaching its birth.

The alternative to bombing, Mr Aaronovitch, is a comprehensive and just Middle East peace process. Only then are the tyrants J SARWAR Edmonton, London

Sir: I believe the British and US bombing of Iraq has been unethical and ineffective in its objectives. Saddam is a vicious ruler, but how can ordinary Iraqis in a weakened state do anything to change their rulers?

If sanctions against Iraq were lifted, Saddam would no longer be able to use the fact that sanctions imposed by the West are stopping sufficient imports of food and medicine. Thirty per cent of the money received from the sale of oil has to be paid to creditors, not used to buy food. Why not let the Iraqis sell as much oil as they wish and import anything except armaments?

The Iraqi government would no longer have any excuse for refusing entry to Unscom inspectors. JOAN HUGHES London N16

Sir: The ability of some politicians and most of the media to misread the public

country who are uncertain about the effectiveness and morality of bombing Iraq, but none the less understand the complexities faced by those who take such strategic decisions, and that doing

In the United States Clinton is pilloried by Republicans and press alike, yet has the highest approval ratings of any president since the Second World War. His recent advice to his demoralised staff revealed the positive side of a complex their best and put their trust in the good sense of the American people. The wisdom of those words will be be seen over the coming months. JAMES MALLINSON London NW3

Sir: As a direct result of its persecution of President Clinton, the Republican Party has lost not one, but two of its leaders.

It has got itself into a situation where two of the articles of impeachment recommended by its majority on the House Judiciary Committee were defeated with the help of its own Congress members. It seems the real story in the US is the self-immolation of the

eaten away at those who perpetrate them. If Shakespeare were alive today he would already be

Clinton's wisdom

mood is breathtaking. There are many in this

Newbury, Berkshire nothing was not an option.

Republican Party. As so often happens, hatred and bitterness have sharpening his quill to dramatise the "split-screen" presidency, complete with the slaughter of the innocents in Iraq. PAUL WALTER

Sir: What would we think if Hail to the Chief were played every time Blair appeared and we all stood to attention. knowing that he couldn't get his Bills through Parliament ("Cruise missiles won't stop the dangers facing US

democracy", 19 December)? The stuffy old British may be lumbered with hereditary eers, a monarchy and an ancient non-constitution but our system is more efficient than the American one: we eighteenth-century colonial time warp. You can't have strong leaders with an American-style constitution and you need strong leaders if you want to be world policeman.

State -of- the art smart bombs are useless without decisive leadership. The Americans need a prime minister based on a majority in the House of Representatives, a less powerful senate, a dignified non-executive president and some form of PR encouraging a wider range of parties.

Then they'd have stronger government based on more active voter participation. KEN CLARK Bedford

Star of wonder

Sir: What is the point of trying to explain the Star of Bethlehem by investigating contemporary astronomical

events, as reported by Roger Highfield (Saturday Essay, 19 December)? The relevant passage in Matthew's Gospel, far from giving useful

questions than it answers. What "magi" would come from "the east", and why would they go to Jerusalem? How could they know that a rising star belonged to "the king of the Jews", when there already was one?

Rather than search for contemporary appearances of comets or novae or conjunctions or occultations of planets, why not just put the story of the star in the same categories as the stories of the sun standing still and darkness covering the earth not astonomy, or ev astrology, but mythology? ANNA FREEMAN Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire

Sir: In a recent school project we investigated the cost of Christmas.

We discovered that the cost of an average family Christmas is about £800 and believe that much could be saved if people became more aware of what they were being persuaded to buy.

One of our teachers introduced us to a friend who, on a visit to the Gambia, had been hospitalised. She was so appalled by the conditions that she now spends much of her time raising money for the hospital in Bansang. We worked out that it would be possible for a family to have a very happy Christmas and save at least £200. This would provide a reconditioned wheelchair for a child in the

Gambia. A cannula, which is a

means of giving life-saving medication, costs only 82p, the equivalent of three Mars bars.

For three days we raised money at school and then presented our findings to our parents at the school carol service. Our friend faxed the hospital and, as we sang our carols, a candle was lit in every ward in Bansang. Our parents dug into their pockets and we will be sending enough money to provide four wheel chairs and 365 cannulas, one for each day of 1999. Our enterprise lasted only five days and involved a relatively small effort but its impact will still be enormous on people the other side of the world. BEN SUMMERS DAVID TIBBETS Middle School Northampton

IN BRIEF

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Sir: At 77, I walk with a stick, having osteoporosis, diabetes, varicose veins, occasional gout and 50 per cent deafness. I 🗳 admit to the odd doddery spell (after my five or six daily pints of Pedigree bitter). But I cannot recognise the "ordeal" of Jack O'Sullivan's 75-year-old (report, 21 December). Shame on Age Concern for being a party to such a caricature. Life is for living. CLAUDE VERRIER Brightlingsea, Essex

Sir: Mr Hague and his fellow Europhobes clearly have a vision of Britain free from rule by Brussels, thus leaving us free to carry out the wishes of Washington. WA WALSH Gravesend, Kent

THE WEASEL

Mrs W marks her birthday by purchasing a truffle at huge expense, but unaccountably the delicacy fails to appear...

SORRY TO harp on about grub on St Dyspepsia's Day, but at least the following vignette does not concern Christmas. As I remarked last week, Mrs Weasel has just notched up a significant birthday.

By way of celebration, she decided to hold a small brunch. This American invention has long held an almost mystical appeal for my wife. She has never quite forgiven me for spoiling Sunday brunch in a fancy Miami hotel a few years ago, when severe gastric problems prompted my rapid departure before we'd had a single bite. Last Sunday, I managed to avoid an repetition of this mishap by taking stringent efforts not to consume any uncooked Mexican sausage beforehand.

Shopping for this wing-ding commenced in an Italian cornucopia in Soho. After buying a ruinous quantity of prosciutto and a Dolomite-sized chunk of Parmesan, Mrs W's restless eye alighted on a handwritten notice announcing the arrival of a consignment of white truffles. "Now, that would be something different," she announced. The deli went all swimmy before me as Mrs W commenced negotiations

over the stratospherically-priced fungi The transaction took on an engagingly

illicit quality when an assistant produced a box filled with small tissue-wrapped pack-

She disinterred a few smallish, gnarled, grey lumps. Though Elizabeth David

writes of seeing "white truffles as large as tennis balls" in Turin shops, the examples presented to us looked exactly like wellworn rubber erasers. After being approvingly sniffed by the manager, our selected fungus was put in a tiny tub and surrounded by rice for protection. "Have it on scrambled eggs. Use a small grater," yelled the manager, as we scooted off clutching our 10-quid deal

On the day of the brunch, our patch of south-east London was transformed into a corner of New York's Upper West Side. I prepared a precarious mound of smoked salmon and cream cheese bagels, while Mrs W began a production line of eggs Benedict, that most quintessentially American of breakfast dishes. There were also potato latkes, hash browns, blini with lumpfish roe, fresh fruit kebabs and a huge

bowl of blueberries. The consumption of this Mount Rushmore of stateside provender was irrigated by vats of Buck's fizz and bloody Mary. It

was only when the last of our guests had burped their farewell, that Mrs W suddenly clapped a hand to her forehead: "The truffle! I forgot all about it." Now there's a pity, isn't it?

ODD THINGS are happening at Time. This week, the magazine gained much attention by its somewhat self-contradictory choice of Bill Clinton and Kenneth Starr as joint "men of the year". Bizarre as this schizophrenic split is, it is not nearly as off-thewall as an opinion expressed in Time the week before.

This appeared in an essay by someone called Rod Usher. Under the cringe-making headline "The Hair of the Dogma", he expounded the proposition that "Tyrants tend to facial hair". In support of his view that "face hair is camouflage, and despots are typically men of disguise". Usher supplied a long list of unpleasant generalissimos who had sported a variety of moustaches: Hitler, Stalin, Franco, Saddam, not to mention our Christmas guest Augusto Pinochet.

Adding the even more barbarous examples of Ho Chi Minh, Lenin and Khome-

ini, Usher concluded: "the ultimate proof of this theory is Fidel Castro."

By the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin, I mused, the blighter's on to something. I bet you anything you like that the phizogs of Attila the Hun, Tamerlane and Ozymandias were all strangers to the razor. On the side of beardies, Abe Lincoln, WE Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli were all pillars of enlightenment, while the virtually hairless Mussolini might be regarded as the dictator's dictator. But surely the most significant example to disprove Usher's case is still very much with us. The last Tory prime minister but one was the most dogmatic leader we've had since the war, and she had no beard to speak of

HEAVEN KNOWS, I'm no nit-picker - but when you spot a glaring anachronism in a display mounted by a learned body, there is an obligation to engage in a spot of whistle-blowing. A couple of years ago, I gave a smallish warble after visiting the Geffrye Museum in Dalston, London E2. Now it's time to give a full-breathed blast. Dedicated to English domestic interiors, this excellent institution re-creates the ap-

pearance of living-rooms through the centuries in a series of converted almshouses. Each Christmas, the museum decks out its displays with decorations and foodstuffs appropriate to the various periods. My particular gripe concerns a tableau

devoted to the 18th century, which at this time of year is augmented by the aftermath of a Christmas feast, including a number of empty oyster shells. Nothing wrong with oysters being part of an 18th-century meal, of course. As everyone knows, they were a favourite snack of the time. Dr John son even bought them for his cat, Hodge. Except that, as I pointed out in an ostreohistorical aside two years ago, the shells on display come from the wrong kind of oysters. They are deep-shelled rock oysters from the Pacific, which would surely have been a bit whiffy by the time they arrived on a London dinner plate. The type eaten by Dr Johnson and his pals was the flatshelled native oyster.

For the first time in two years, I happened to be passing the Geffrye the other day, so I popped in to see its festive displays. Now I don't want to give the impression that I'm some sort of obsessive nutcase - perish the thought - but I couldn't resist steal

ing a glance at the 18th-century section. Guess what? The erroneous Pacific oysters were still there. As far as I could tell, they were exactly the same shells as last time. Since the Geffrye is not a million miles from the New Billingsgate Market, it shouldn't be too hard to get hold of a few dozen historically correct shellfish. And if the museum requires any help with consuming the bivalves prior to display, it knows whom to call.

ONE AMUSING aspect of the Mandelson affair is the euphonious moniker of his 24year-old adviser, Benjamin Wegg-Prosser. By a strange coincidence, Geoffrey Robinson, the New Labour millionaire, is strikingly reminiscent of Alexander "Oofy" Prosser, official moneyed man of the Drone's Club. I cite the following exchange between Oofy and Bingo Little from P G Wodehouse's Eggs, Beans and Crumpets.
"Bingo, old chap, don't I seem to recall

hearing you ask for a fiver or something?" Oofy shook his head. "It's not enough," he said. "Would you mind if I made it fifty?" "Not a bit." replied Peter - I mean Bingo.

THE INDEPENDENT

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A year that has defined the Labour government and ourselves

LOOKING BACK over the year, Peter Mandelson's period in office shed as much light on the nature of this government as did his sudden leaving of it. In just 150 days in the Cabinet, he symbolised the emergence of New Labour from the dark into the light. When a whisperer-in-ears becomes Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, he has to make real decisions. Mr Mandelson defined himself, and the Government of which he was briefly a member, as pragmatic, pro-European and with his liberal heart in the right place.

He faced, for example, an important test of the Government's commitment to a competitive free market when he had to make a highly technical decision about the future of the Post Office. He fudged it. He was not interested in producing the best economic solution, but in balancing the political forces: so we were treated to a rhetorical mixture of public service and the free market. New Labour is not, then, really dedicated to competition - but neither, of course, were the Conservatives, transferring monopolies lock, stock and pork-barrel to the private sector.

The Independent feels strongly about competition, not simply because this newspaper was launched to give readers choice or because we have felt the rough edges of Rupert Murdoch's monopolistic tendencies. We believe that one of the reasons for Britain's relative economic underperformance is its unenterprising culture and the feebleness of governments in dealing with the anti-competitive instincts of large corporations. The machinery of trustbusting is far, far too slow in this country.

However, we do not want to give the impression - which can easily arise from the instant commentary of day-today journalism - that this Government is a miserable failure. Tony Blair has done much of which we approve, starting in Northern Ireland, and across a broad front in beginning to reverse the social division of the Thatcher years. The minimum wage, set at a level that will not destroy jobs, the raising of child benefit, the attention to finding work for the unemployed and lone parents, and the focus on the causes of social exclusion are all welcome.

Above all, in its stewardship of the wider economy, the Government nas not yet made any oovious mistakes, which must be counted as an achievement of some magnitude - and a historic one for the Labour Party. It was right to make the Bank of England independent, although there is a problem with the asymmetry of the Bank's inflation target, which gives the monetary policy committee an incentive to keep interest rates too high. And, in practice, although we have quarrelled with the speed of its response to evidence of the economy slowing down, the committee seems sensitive to the dangers. The Government's real error has been a political one - that of promising to "end the cycle of boom and bust", which is bound to feed a sense of betrayal when the business cycle reasserts itself. Above and beyond this lies the question of how soon the British cycle will converge with continental Europe's, and how soon Britain will join the euro.

Europe

ONE OF the most important of the Government's positive achievements is to mark a turning point in the history of our erratic relations with our neighbours. Mr Blair, to his great credit, has begun a long zig towards Europe after the unsteady zag that was taken in the opposite direction during the late Major years.

Mr Mandelson was important, not just as an exemplar of New Labour's hollow morality, but as a pro-European who said some suggestive things which ought to be included in any instant anthology of quotations. In January, he said: "Europe can be a superpower without being a superstate." Well, can it? Agree with it or not - and, broadly, we do agree it was a provocative statement that asked the fundamental questions about the purpose of the European Union which ought to be asked at this point, six days away from the formal launch of the euro. We want the EU to be neither a superstate nor a superpower in the Cold-War sense, but we want it to have influence in the world, to be a force for democracy, and the rule of law independently of the United States. For that reason, Mr Blair's plans for greater defence co-operation are as welcome as his closeness to the US over Iraq is suspect. An EU defence force would not be a "European army" any more than Nato forces are a "North Atlantic army"; in that respect, the Eurosceptic spectre of the federal superstate cannot be invoked.

For most of this century, a currency has been as potent a symbol of nationhood as an army, but the world is changing. From next Friday, we will experience an intensification of the forces that render the idea of national monetary sovereignty either illusory or counter-productive. We will be a middle-sized economy on the edge of a huge singlecurrency zone that is bigger than the US. We are already following interest rate changes across the euro zone within days. We have to come to terms with a new idea of national sovereignty. If the constitution of the European Central Bank worries us - and it should, because it is secretive and undemocratic - we are only going to be able to change it from the inside. It is true that, in a large, unified market, there will be a constant gravitational pull towards political union - but that should be a good thing, provided that it always proceeds at the speed of the most reluctant member of the convoy.

It is the very endlessness of pro-European rhetoric the "ever-closer union" of the treaties - that is a problem, because any sceptic horror can be placed convincingly



somewhere down the track. That is why the urgent business of the EU is to entrench the notion of consent, so that citizens have a real say in what matters to them and the language of "imposition from Brussels" is expunged. Radical notions, such as directly-elected EU commissioners, are needed, especially as the Union grows. But we have to embrace the future in a more confident frame of mind. The economic changes of the information age will transform - are already transforming - the significance of the nation state. Britain should be leading the charge, if for no other reason than that, alone among Europeans, we do not have to park our language in a museum of national heritage in order to speak to the future.

At least, after years of dithering, of accepting large steps towards European integration on the basis that they were technical free-market measures and then bitterly regretting them afterwards, we now have a Prime Minister who - it became clear during this year - is prepared to act on the understanding that Britain's future lies in Europe.

Our democracy

IF THE renewal of democracy in the EU has yet to begin, Mr Blair made useful progress this year in reforming Britain's own dated constitution. His coup in forcing the Tory hereditary peers to roll over was a triumph of instinctive politics, knowing where to apply pressure and keep it applied. It was an important step, but a limited one it is a strange reform of the hereditary principle that leaves an unmodernised monarchy. What is more, Roy Jenkins' report on electoral reform, less than two months after publication, seems to be gathering the very dust its author vowed would not be allowed to settle.

Our criticism of Paddy Ashdown has been that he has failed to promote liberal values aggressively, which is the only argument for plural politics worth having. Instead of playing footsie with Mr Blair in the hope of delivering an electoral system to the Liberal Democrats' advantage, he should have been voting against the illiberal Terrorism and Conspiracy Act passed in a dangerous parliamentary spasm after the Omagh bombing.

Mr Blair is devolving power to Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London, and yet he is an unconvincing pluralist. But when we accuse him of being a control freak, it is only an expression of our sympathetic concern for his self-interest. It does him no good to be trying to fix internal party elections or, worse, to impose a system of elections for the European parliament which will tend to strengthen party machines. And what possible purpose was served by preventing Labour MPs registering their protest against the bombing of Iraq?

Rule of international law

IF THE bombing of Iraq was the right thing to do, as we reluctantly accept it was, then it would not weaken Mr Blair's authority to allow Tony Benn - who conspicuously failed to offer any alternative means of restraining Saddam Hussein's murderous intentions - to vote against it. The US/British attack on Iraq has been an imperfect instrument of justice, but 1998 has never the less been a hopeful year in the development of international law against tyrants and war criminals.

The Nuremberg doctrine - that some crimes are so terrible that countries have the right to intrude on the sovereignty of others in order to bring perpetrators to justice - has been advanced significantly. The ad hoc courts set up at The Hague to try Bosnian war criminals could now be universalised in the form of the International Criminal Court, set up this year despite US opposition. If President Clinton had backed the court, his moral authority in Iraq would have been the greater.

The passivity and bluster of European leaders over Kosovo, the Serbian province still being "cleansed" of ethnic Albanians, has been one step back. But one step forward was taken by a heroic Spanish magistrate when he applied for General Pinochet's extradition. Like Woody Allen's Zelig, Mr Mandelson was there, too, opining that General Pinochet was a "brutal dictator" and that the idea of diplomatic immunity for him was "gut-wrenching". He was tactically unwise to show his feelings - but they were not the wrong feelings to have. More seriously, Lord Hoffmann was truly daft to overlook his connections with Amnesty International - but Amnesty's arguments were right, and it is to be hoped that they will prevail when the five new Law Lords come to deliver their verdicts next month. Anything which strengthens supra-national jurisdiction over crimes against humanity is right, even if its main effective sanction is only to exile retired dictators from Harrods.

Quality of life

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THIS WAS also the year in which the Government first published an index of the "quality of life" in this country. Anything that focuses on measures of national well-being, other than that of Gross Domestic Product, must be a good thing. But the Government has hardly begun to take those real "tough choices needed to secure our environment in trust for tomorrow", as Labour ringingly declared before

Never the less, our impression of the past year is that the quality of life for most people in Britain might have, on balance, improved a little. To be sure. our lives are blighted unnecessarily by Chris Evans and the National Lottery. But, as a people, we are a little healthier, and the Government shows some sign of taking better schooling seriously - although it is far too prescriptive for the youngest children. We take a livelier than ever interest in the arts and the Internet: far from killing the book, has given it a new lease of life.

Nor has a better quality of life for the majority blinded us to our responsibilities to others. One of the best surprises of the year was the extraordinarily generous response from our readers to the appeal for the victims of the flooding caused by Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Nicaragua. We have also been concerned about deprivation at home: we reported Sir Donald Acheson's findings of the persistent links between economic inequality and ill-health, and our Christmas appeal focused on the needs of one group in poverty in particular, namely the less fortunate among the old. As we promised in our first edition: "Our campaigning will emerge from our reporting rather than the other way round."

We hope to look back on 1998 as the year in which The Independent, having secured its financial future, regained the confidence of its founding spirit. This newspaper was created, above all, to serve its readers with "journalism of the highest standard", and we promised: "We will both praise and criticise without reference to the party line." We hope that that was as true over the past year as it was when the paper launched in 1986.

We also said something else to our readers in that first issue: "Your relationship with us will finally determine what sort of newspaper we are." Although we believe our values are still essentially the same, The Independent looks and feels very different from Issue No 1, largely in response to what you want us to be. We depend on an active, opinionated and independent readership to survive, and look forward to your support, brickbats and involvement in the year to come.

THE BOMBING OF IRAQ

Opinions about the outcome of United States and British military action against Saddam Hussein

SING TAO China

THE OPERATION Desert Fox assault against Iraq has not produced any meaningful results. The action failed to win support from other countries and has proved unable to shake Saddam's power. Instead, the attacks have united the people there and sparked anger in other Islamic countries. On the other hand, Peking has tackled this issue skilfully. It urged the US and Britain to end the military action and seek ways of continuing the weapons investigations through diplomatic channels. China has thereby struck a chord with many other countries around the world and has strengthened its diplomatic hand.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE CHALLENGE now for the Security Council is how to contain Iraq. Clinton has not ruled out future bombings, but this is no solution, and no one wants a permanent state of war. The Administration also wants to bring down the Iraqi government, but Saddam Hussein seems remarkably resilient and the opposition divided and weak.

What is required is some creative thinking, but the Security Council is polarized. Chances have to be taken. and perhaps now is the time to consider a provisional lifting of sanctions - not to reward Iraq but to provide an incentive for it to accept monitoring. Failure to comply would result in the reinstatement of sanctions. Through a combination of carrot and stick, it is possible that Iraq could be brought back to the community of nations.

GULF TIMES UAE

BOMBING IRAQ was a mistake. To do so with so little consultation with other countries was a disaster: to do so without fresh authorisation from the United Nations Security Council was even worse. Britain to question what is being done. If "new order"!

Blair's government is so entranced by Clinton that it cannot ask the US Administration directly, then the British Opposition should start to ask questions of Blair.

JORDAN TIMES

THE ARAB world needs to get its act together by adopting a clear and coherent stance on the Iraqi situation in the aftermath of last week's bornbardments of the country. The Lower House of Parliament in Jordan has taken due notice of the bold declarations and actions of Moscow, Peking and the Vatican on Iraq, and, rightly, lamented Arab inaction. This is as good an occasion as any for the major Arab capitals to co-ordinate their efforts with Paris, Moscow and Peking to return sanity and compassion to the conflict.

KOREA TIMES

THE STRIKES have done irreversible damage to the United Nations security council's effective mechanism to check Saddam Hussein's evil designs. By far the greatest loss is that the air strikes may have prompted a vast number of people in the Arab world to sympathise with the Saddam Hussein regime. Surely, a long-term psychological warfare campaign aimed at turning Iraqis against their ruthless dictator may be the most far-sighted option in terms of strategies to replace the present military action President Clinton's Administration so foolishly embarked upon last

SYRIA TIMES

THE WHOLE world condemned this aggression on Iraq which was carried out to fulfil political objectives and personal ends. Hundreds of innocent Iraqi victims fell to satisfy President Bill Clinton's needs. He killed many civilians and destroyed many educational, economic and medical facilities. It is only part of the evidence of the criminal policy pursued by the only superpower in

A Victorian morality tale

THE GUARDIAN

THIS WAS not Neil Hamilton or Tim Smithstyle sleaze. Far from it. Our view remains that Peter Mandelson was guilty of vanity rather than venality and that since the source of his funding - a loan, not a gift was from a ministerial colleague rather than an outside businessman, it hardly plumbs the depths of the Tory years.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

IN HIS farewell letter to Mr Mandelson. Mr Blair quoted his old friend as saving: "We can't be like the last lot." They are not like the last lot: they are far worse. Tory "sleaze" took almost 15 years in office to become a serious problem. New Labour has managed it in as many months.

THE MIRROR

THIS IS a defining moment in politics. Peter Mandelson exemplified everything New Labour stands for, and today he is ruined. The downfall of the Trade Secretary tells us many things, chief among them that politicians should not cut themselves off from the people. (Paul Routledge)

DAILY MAIL

MR BLAIR came to power promising an end to even the appearance of sleaze. Yet from the Formula One imbroglio to Geoffrey Robinson's labyrinthine financial affairs and Mr Mandelson's bizarre mortgage arrangements, that "purity" has often seemed less than pristine.

FINANCIAL TIMES

BORROWING MONEY - even a large sum was nothing to be ashamed of. Allegations that Mandelson misled the press about the source of funds for his £475,000 house can be dismissed as pique. But as one who was in the vanguard of criticising Tory MPs for financial sleaze, he should have been super-sensitive to the



PETER MANDELSON'S RESIGNATION

Verdicts on the career of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, who resigned over a loan from a fellow minister

priety, especially after he joined the Cabinet in the summer reshuffle.

THE TIMES

need for a scrupulous adherence to pro- IT HAS all the ingredients of a great Vic- to power. Success turns both their heads.

torian novel. The talented middle-class man who ingratiates himself with the rich and famous, and becomes the favoured weekend guest of the heir to the throne. The businessman on the make who uses his nouveau richesse to grease his assent Dear reader you can guess where their pride leads them. (Mary Ann Sieghart)

EVENING STANDARD

MANDELSON WILL now probably lie low for a while. But supporters of Blair's vision of "New Labour" should hope that Mandelson will return soon, at least in an informal role. In Blair's 1994 leadership campaign, Mandelson played a vital background role, operating under the pseudonym "Bobby". We should not be surprised if he starts playing a similar role in the months ahead as Blair starts to map out his campaign to win the next general election, which may be little more than two years away. Nor should we be appalled. Despite his lapse of judgement, Mandelson is a powerful force for good. He will, and should, be back. (Peter Keliner)

THE SUN

IF THERE is one lesson from the case of Mandy's loan, it is this: honesty is not just the best policy. It is the only policy when you are in public life. And what does all this tell us about Tony Blair? We will never know if Mandelson resigned or was sacked. But one thing's sure. If Blair is strong enough to say goodbye to Mandelson, then nobody in government can rest easy.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL EUROPE Brussels

FT IS instructive that what forced Mr Mandelson (and his friend Geoffrey Robinson) out of government yesterday was the mere appearance of impropriety. Indeed, anyone who finds Mr Clinton's impeachment hard to swallow ought to choke over the Mandeison affair.

Mr Mandelson's resignation may leave Tony Blair without a trusted ally and adviser in government, and it may give Labour's left new impetus to push an old agenda. But his resignation preserves the sense that this Government takes seriously its commitment to probity and accountability. Americans might profitably take note.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

Views on the record of the Israeli Prime Minister, who lost a vote of confidence in the Knesset this week

JERUSALEM POST Israel

UNTIL THE revolution wrought by Benjamin Netanyahu, it should be remembered, the peace debate was split between those who favored territorial compromise and those who believed that the Arab world would not make real peace, but only take advantage of Israeli concessions. That debate is now over: the argument is no longer over the principle of slicing the pie, only which party will negotiate a better and higger piece for Israel.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

IN THE Knesset, hard-line conservatives, nationalists and religious leaders were furious that he had signed a deal with Arafat granting territory to the Palestinians, even though Netanyahu has balked at im-

Canada



commodation with the Palestinians, objected that the premier refused to carry out the Wye compact in good faith. Playing both sides against the middle and seeking centrist IN HIS two-and-a-half years in the majority's confidence.

CANBERRA TIMES Australia

Verdens

GANG

NETANYAHU HAD no long-term vision or commitment to peace. plementing it. Knesset leftists He fumbled. He delayed. He en-THE VIEWS OF THE WORLD

THE TRIAL OF BILL CLINTON The press considers whether the United States

POST

tain the support of the religious THE SENATE should censure right. Domestically, too, he appeased them with funds for him. He needs to be forced to their special schools and speacknowledge, as he has not cial religious laws. Now he is exthus far, not just what he did but why it matters - that lies of the posed. Israelis and the Palestinians deserve a better sort he told under oath and oth-Israeli prime minister - one erwise raise a legitimate quescommitted to peace, not a tion as to the fitness of a chameleon who plays with a peace process in order to stay president to serve. Censure is the least harmful of the imperfect alternatives, and the Senate should find a way to get

DENVER POST

support, too, Netanyahu was power, Benjamin Netanyahu caught in the crunch and lost proved himself more of a pragmatist than an ideologue, but was unable to overcome the chronic instability of Israeli

gaged the Americans in a cat-

and-mouse game. He juggled

the peace process, hoping to re-

It is to be hoped that whoever forms the next government can attract a broad enough majority to build a solid foundation for a lasting peace.

Senate should convict or censure the President

THE WASHINGTON

THE STRAITS TIMES Singapore

CLINTON HAS vowed to remain in the job. But once the trial gets under way he will find he has to divide his attention between the hearings and the goings-on in the rest of the world. No prize for guessing which of the two will require closer attention.

THE BOSTON GLOBE

THE OVERWHELMING majority of Republican senators will vote for conviction, so the president's fate rests in the hands of 45 Democrats. They must decide whether to condone or condemn. It is said that enough votes to convict Clinton cannot be found in the Senate chamber. Do not believe it. (John Ellis)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

EVEN NOW it is not too late for Mr Clinton to quit. Americans by and large increasingly feel that the episode has assumed the macabre overtones of a witch hunt and do not want to bear witness to Mr Clinton's impeachment; they would rather that he demit office on his own, thereby preserving at least a shred of dignity for a White House repainted in the primary colours of lies and lust.

PAN AM FLIGHT 103

Reflections on the tenth anniversary of the explosion of a passenger aircraft above Lockerbie

THE DAILY RECORD

TEN YEARS on, Lockerbie is again the reluctant focus for feelings and memories. Bitterness is only natural. Especially from the relatives who have received neither apology nor explanation for the failings which led to the deaths of their loved ones. And especially when, on the anniversary of their loss. Colonel Gaddafi resumes his cat-and-mouse game over the trial of the Libyan suspects.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

The behaviour of the US government in the Lockerbie case has not inspired confidence. The Justice Department has pursued a persecution campaign against those who have challenged the official version of events, especially those who subscribe to the view that the bombing was an Iranian-Syrian plot. Their claim is that Libya

had little or nothing to do with the case, but was made a scapegoat for political reasons. The best way to clear the air

over this is to go through with the trial of the two Libyans. If prosecutors fail to establish guilt, the Syrian-Iranian angle will have to be reopened. THE TIMES

We are still attempting to identify the perpetrators of that

outrage, the worst single act of terrorism since the war. Or rather, we have decided instead to find a scapegoat. The two Libyan suspects are only bit-players, small cogs in a far larger terrorist machine. As the intelligence services of Britain, the US, and probably Israel, know full well, full responsibility for the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 lies elsewhere. Libya was not even the prime mover. If it had been, Colonel Gaddafi would not now be contemplating the risk of allowing two suspects out of his country.

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around the world

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

MOOSE COULD die off in dra-

matic numbers this year if the snow continues or the weather warms. Roughly three feet of snow has fallen in the area ber, but so far the snow is light and powdery, making travel for the moose relatively easy. If warm weather comes and a crust covers the snow, walking in search of food will become more difficult

If more snow comes, the willows become covered and snow gets deeper and someone wants to aid a struggling animal, packing a trail with a snow machine or snowshoes will help moose save energy and get it on its way.

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

WHILE DOING an impers-

onation of Freddy Mercury in since the beginning of Decem- a bar, I was asked to desist. Apparently such an expression of gratitude to music was unlawful in Hong Kong as in the eyes of the constabulary it constituted "dancing". As the bar did not have a dancing permit. I was [encouraging] the management to permit it. All would have been well had I stayed food becomes scarce. If the rooted to the spot but my pathetic attempts at Freddy's body gestures crossed the line. What happened to the right to harmless self-entertainment?

RESEARCH BY SALLY CHATTERTON

QUOTES OF THE WEEK



"The way I see things is that at 50, your body guarantee runs out. At 60 you are into heavy maintenance and, at 65, injury time or worse" Shirley Contan, novelist

This is a tremendously sad day for Hartlepool." Peter Barron, the editor of The Hartlepool Mail' reacting to the resignation of Peter Mandelson

"Consumer capitalism has eaten up the Church, the state, trade unions, extended families, everywhere that people learn morality" Irvine Welsh, novelist and playwright

"It's made the United States the laughing stock of the world and our political atmosphere entertaining, silly and sad" Woody Allen, film maker, on the President Clinton

"I would hate the public to think that all MPs insist on having half a million pound houses." Diane Abbott, Labour IMP

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affair.

Norway







BALTIMORE SUN US

THE SATURDAY ESSAY

There's no going back to the golden age of sport



RICHARD WILLIAMS

To talk about the good old days in a tone of nostalgic yearning is merely to waste valuable time

HERE IS the sports news. A leading tennis player has been fined after a positive result from a drugs test at Wimbledon. In Australia, two world-famous Test cricketers have been instructed to appear before an official inquiry looking into an illegal betting operation.

And that, on Radio 4's Today programme one morning this week, was that. No results, no overnight scores, no deeds of heroism or uncommon skill to arouse the reluctant spirits in a bleak midwinter dawn. Just business as usual - the latest in a litany of sleaze, smear and scandal that has virtually submerged what is supposed to be the real business of sport throughout this year, with examples generated in practically every conceivable register and dimension.

An England footballer is hung in effigy outside an Essex pub. His manager writes a book betraying his players' confidences. The Tour de France, an institution watched by more spectators than any other live sporting event, is crippled by police investigations into systematic drug abuse. England's most successful rugby captain suddenly becomes a national hate figure, in belated revenge for his perceived arrogance. A German racing driver dashes along the pit lane intent on accusing a Scottish rival of trying to kill him and, apparently, looking for appropriate revenge. An Italian footballer pushes an English referee to the ground. A boxer who bit a chunk off his opponent's ear during career of making millions for himself and even more millions for those who promote him. An Irish swimmer is finally found guilty of drug-taking after a wearyingly protracted investigation, devaluing her three Olympic gold medals (pending appeal, inevitably). An English swimmer fails in her campaign to have her silver medal transmuted into gold by the removal from the records of an East German opponent now known to have abused illegal substances. A players' lock-out paralyses the professional basketball league in the US, which means that the game is wantonly withholding itself from the young fans whose addiction it has so assiduously and lucratively encouraged. Multinational corporations attempt to buy some of the world's oldest and most illustrious football clubs, their only inter-

But tennis? And cricket? Those whiteclad games of summer, born in a world of sunlit garden parties, the traditional emphasis of which on good manners - the etiquette of the anguished "Sorry, partner" and the gruffly acknowledged "Good shot" was woven into the conduct of the sport as firmly as the rules of play? Well, maybe tennis long ago forfeited its good name. thanks to the unpunished gamesmanship of Connors and the poisoned genius of McEnroe. And in cricket, although a warning shot was fired when the words 'Marsh", "Lillee" and "bookmaker' appeared in the same sentence, perhaps it all went to hell in the instant it took Mike Atherton, England's longest-serving captain, to decide not to follow the tradition of walking when caught behind at Trent Bridge, and the fate of last summer's Test series turned favourably on his refusal.

est in the game the profit it can generate.

No sensible observer can consider these events, and the overarching phenomenon that they represent, without sooner or later being drawn into raising the question of exactly what sport represents in our time, and what, in fact, it is



Riders in last summer's Tour de France staging a strike in protest at their treatment during the doping scandals that dogged the race Jacky Naegelen

for. Beyond, that is, its recently assumed function of ensuring the further enrichment of the owners of multinational communications networks and the manufacturers of £100 training shoes.

Almost anyone old enough to be a parent will remember a time when the answers were clear and threefold. Sport existed primarily for the benefit of the parits, to provide them with a venicio for the development and exercise of certain special instincts and skills in a healthily competitive environment. Secondly, it existed to provide fun and excitement for spectators, offering an outlet for the human capacity for unreasonable loyalty and unreflective enthusiasm, additionally enriching the store of collective experience and shared memory. Finally, it provided young and unformed minds with a series of behavioural models: not just how to win and how to lose with symmetrical equanimity but how to oppose and how to collaborate, how to hold an advantage and how to recover from a setback, how to lead and how to follow.

All these lessons came under the heading of "Sporting Behaviour", but they were generally accepted to have a wider application in the development of individual character. And no matter how regularly or cynically they were flouted by professionals in the public eye, the principles stood unchallenged. Players and officials and spectators alike, everyone knew where he or she stood in relation to the underlying ethic.

But in recent years the position of sport in society has changed almost beyond recognition. As leisure time and disposable incomes have generally increased, sport has become part of the vast entertainment industry developed to service the demand for recreation. Sports stars, soap-opera actors and members of the royal family have assumed equal status in the new democracy promoted by the strategic synergy of television and newspaper interests. This exaggerated interest in private lives places the existence of prominent sports people in an entirely different (and, for some of its subjects, unendurable) perspective, creating an artificial appetite for news about the love life of a golf champion or the addiction of a gifted footballer. All the old attitudes - not least the nature of what might be called petty patriotism in contemporary life, as evi-

denced by the immoderate support for British tennis players at Wimbledon - have had to be readjusted to take account of this commercially induced shift in perception.

The earlier reference to parents was not accidental. To the surprise and dismay of many, that old belief in the character-forming function of games has been overtaken by another exemplary use of sport, embodied by the nece sity to speno a men proportion of breakfast-time conversations explaining to children exactly why the two men who run English football are in disgrace, what it is that the man whose legbreaks we were copying in the park last summer is supposed to have done, why two women are allowed to put on gloves and punch each other for money and why the boy who goes out with a Spice Girl and whose poster is on your sister's wall is being treated as though he had committed high treason.

For some of us, this new experience began five years ago, with Eric Cantona's intemperate physical response to the verbal goading of Matthew Simmons on that notorious night at Selhurst Park. "Indefensible!" roared the headline the next morning in LEquipe, the daily sports newspaper of Cantona's home country. It was the obvious instant reaction to the player's assault on the fan, but even by the time the paper reached the news-stands it seemed less than adequate. Although Simmons had slandered Cantona's mother in terms that might have seemed barely exaggerated from the usual run of terrace insult, the Frenchman refused to turn a deaf ear. His dramatic kung fu kick stirred a fascinating and perhaps ultimately constructive debate about the extent to which Britain's small army of Simmonses could be indulged before someone came to the conclusion that it was time to make an un-

mistakable gesture of disapproval. This debate found its most important level at the breakfast table, where young attitudes were being shaped in the crucible of moral ambiguities. At the other end of a very specific and narrow spectrum from the Cantona incident, the product of Paolo Di Canio's utterly stupid assault on referee Paul Alcock was refreshingly unequivocal; in any imaginable circumstances, laying a hand on the ref is a bad thing and brings condign punishment.

Few people will have a problem with the

just in terms of fairness towards all contestants but in terms of the health of the abusers - mostly predicated on so-far unknown side-effects of products that have not been around long enough to

undergo adequate testing programmes. However, you would have to be hard of heart not to extend some degree of sympathy toward cyclists whose teams impose arug-dasea training regimes and who welcome the short-term reduction in sheer physical pain brought about by the various illicit injections and ingestions. From the saddle, bicycle racing is bitterly hard and unglamorous work, and its tradition of chemical assistance goes back to its very origins.

The same cannot be said for swimmers and athletes, victims of the steroid syndrome in the last quarter-century. But sympathy for those who take drugs merely in order to avoid having to give the rest of the field a 10-metre start, and who do so with the greatest reluctance, should not be allowed to obscure the unacceptability of their habit, even in a world where recreational drug use is a commonplace in every

stratum of society. Most of the incidents discussed so far would have been unlikely, if not effectively impossible, in previous generations. In most cases, the difference is created by the opportunity to make big money, usually from the proceeds of the sale of television rights or from its associated revenuestreams, such as sponsorship or product endorsement. The staggering prosperity of top-level football appears to be the sporting equivalent of a victimless crime. despite the sterling efforts of the Newcastle United board to alienate virtually everyone in sight. But the wholesale takeover of rugby union by millionaires - including members of the Newcastle United board

has been a disaster, at least in the medium term; a formerly amateur game has been intoxicated by the illusion of prosperity, drunk on nothing more than the fumes from the next table.

As for individuals, no one who knows much about human nature would fall for a suggestion that well remunerated players will necessarily be more contented and therefore better behaved. In the vast majority of people, athletes and non-athletes alike, the most powerful effect of the sudden acquisition of large amounts of question of drug use in sport. All bad, not money is the strengthening of the desire

to acquire even more, with the consequent corrosive effect on such things as scruples. A secondary effect is the creeping

assumption of superiority to the rest of mankind and a consequent exemption from its most basic rules (although this, as we have learnt from the front pages of this week's newspapers, is a phenomenon not wholly confined to the world of sport). And yet, in a seeming

also witnessed a piece of sporting behaviour as immaculately unselfish as anything within living memory. The fact that it took place during an international cricket match made it only slightly less surprising. By declaring an innings closed against Pakistan while his own score stood at 334 not out, the Australian captain, Mark Taylor, left himself tied with Don Bradman for the highest Test score made by an Aussie batsman, denving himself a solus position at the top of a list of numbers but winning a special place among the immortals for his refusal to claim a spurious statistical superiority to the greatest practitioner of his craft. Triumph and modesty went hand in hand; it was like being in a time-warp.

But to talk about the good old days in a tone of nostalgic yearning is a waste of breath. We don't and can't live in them. We can learn from history, certainly, but we live in our own time, with its own kind of evolution, its own pressures and imperatives, and we should get on with confronting the reality of what that means. Rather than attempting to impose some idealised model drawn from an imperfectly remembered past, far better to invent a new set of responses in which imagination is blended with common sense. Hard to achieve, certainly, in the present overheated climate. But each discipline has its strengths and weaknesses, and its value in the developing market place. Players owners and administrators need to apply realism to an assessment of their standing and to use that knowledge to create organic growth without running the kind of risk - that of total ignominy and potential obliteration - from which British rugby union clubs are struggling to extricate ethics within that changing framework, to reimpose a sense of right and wrong that does not rely on the ever-fainter memory of Corinthian precepts, represents the biggest challenge in sport.

Days Like These

LAN IRVINE



26 DECEMBER 1932

JULIAN GREEN, novelist (pictured), writes in his diary:

'My wounded knee obliges me to lie on the drawing-room sola most of the day. I read Sense and Sensibility before a big log fire. Delightful day! A feeling of deep security, very near to that peace that passes all understanding mentioned in the Bible. I put down my book. from time to time to watch the flames and smell the odour of the burning wood. Jane Austen's method consists in contrasting one moral quality with another - which quality she strives to personify - and although I find the method a trifle mechanical, I surrender to the charm of a writer whose smile is never a grimace and from whom emotion never draws a scream, for well-bred people don't scream. Jane Austen always remains a little within the bounds of what she wants to say, with the exquisite reserve that she alone possesses, but none the less her delineation is admirably clear. Compared with her, Charlotte Bronte seems wildly

26 DECEMBER 1918

SIR EVELYN WRENCH, diplomat, records in his diary:

"St Stephen's Day 1918 will long

be remembered as one of the landmarks in the history of the English-speaking world. It was an historic moment when President Wilson, the successor of George Washington, stepped on to the platform of Charing Cross railway station to be greeted by His Majesty King George V, the lineal descendant of George III. As I watched the two men shake hands and noted the warmth with which they greeted each other, I felt that history was being made before my eyes. Two minutes later the King introduced Mr Lloyd George to the President, and all eyes were focussed on the two leaders of the Englishspeaking Democracies... All shades of political opinion on this side of the Atlantic were determined that the official head of the American Republic should receive such a welcome as was never before extended to any visitor to these shores. The cordiality and warmth of London's welcome to Mr Wilson will long be remembered by those who saw it. But the outstanding impression in my mind is the picture of that tall. smiling man talking animatedly to the little Welshman on the railway platform. These two men are between them very largely moulding the destinies of mankind at the Peace Conference. It is gratifying to know from their lips how identical are the aims of our two peoples and how close is the spirit of co-operation which exists between us. How fervently can we all re-echo the prayer of the King in his speech of welcome that the same brotherly spirit which has animated Great Britain and America in the war may inspire and guide their united efforts to secure for the world 'an ordered freedom and an



tional at this time of year, he was roundly abused for his pains.

Consider this. If someone were to dress up as, say, Mike Atherton or Tina Turner and rob a sub-post office, you would not find a headline reading: "Mike Atherton robs post office." At the very least the words Mike Atherton" would be safely encased in quotation marks. Yet every year various unspeakable deeds committed by Santa Claus impersonators are reported in the newspapers as if perpetrated by the great man himself.

Only this week in Michigan, a scheme in which volunteers reply to letters that children have sent to Santa was sabotaged by a renegade

HE CAME, he gave and, as is tradi- Father Christmas threatening in his reply to kill the child's pet dog. "I'll kill your dog - love Santa" was the newspaper headline. No quotation marks to be seen. Nor were there any in the story of the Santa snoring soundly in a department store grotto after lunching too well, nor in the one that crops up every year about the Santa who either mugs or exposes himself to a passer by in Fifth Avenue.

Judging by the terrible press Santa Claus gets, you might suppose him to be a murderer or a game show host rather than a giver of gifts and a bringer of joy. It is not even as if he asked for the role - we imposed it on him. He heroically shouldered the burden and now finds himself the

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE

20TH CENTURY

20: SANTA CLAUS

unfortunate focus of our discontent when we are dissatisfied - as many of us were yesterday - with the

baubles he has brought us. In the fourth century, of course, when Saint Nicholas was Archbishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, the consumer society was not quite as developed as it is today. Good deeds and saintly ways were his speciality rather than electronic -games consoles with arcade-quality graphics.

Students of capitalism will know, of course, that dissatisfaction is crucial in keeping the system going. If the stuff we acquired made us News of his goodness spread happy, we wouldn't desire any more across the Mediterranean to Holland, and the Dutch adopted Saint Nicholas, or "Sinterklaas", as

unavailable in northern Europe.

stuff, and sheep might just as well safely graze on the sites of our wonderful out-of-town shopping malls. But Santa, bless him, has never the patron saint of Amsterdam. read a word of Kari Marx and con-Every December the good saint tinues to bring his simple gifts of would bring the children of the city pullovers and questionable perfume simple gifts from across the seas, exotic fruits such as oranges, in the heroically misguided belief

near as high as they were yesterday

as we unwrapped our booty.

that they will make us happy. And how do we reward him? For It is not recorded how pleased the most of the year, starting today, we Dutch children were with their

edibles, but it is doubtful whether forget all about him. Then, next dissatisfaction levels were anywhere December, we start again with the bad jokes - "I don't care who you are, get those reindeer off my roof" - the records that portray him as a cross between a child molester and the CIA - "He sees when you are sleeping, he knows if you're awake" - and the execrable movies in which, if he is lucky, he will find himself portrayed by Dudley Moore.

As if that were not enough for one person, saint or no saint, to bear, we top it all off by fuelling him on his annual mission with tooth-shortening, artery-clogging mince pies and the kind of sherry normally enjoyed al fresco wrapped in a sturdy brown paper bag. I tell you, if the guy were not such a hero, he would jack it in

Louis Freedman

made property millionaire and the owner-breeder of the 1987 Derby winner Reference Point. A natural administrator who served on the ous health authorities, he was also one of the country's most successful bloodstock breeders and was the Hackney Health Authority, 1982-84. last British owner to win the Derby.

oughbred and the great success with which he ran his Cliveden Stud at Taplow in Berkshire that brought him into the public eye, though he was always at pains to stress that he was not keen on the publicity which surrounds the highly successful racehorse owner.

For a man who rose to somewhere near the top in almost everything he tried to do there was no outward hint of a ruthless streak. The genial Freedman retained a refreshing outlook on life and was particularly fond of humorous understatement. He was happy to chat about his horses and their chances - which inevitably he played down - and he clearly enjoyed his involvement in what started as a relaxation and turned into a success-driven breeding business. He rose through racing's corridors of power to become President of the Racehorse Owners' Association from 1972 to 1974 and Deputy Senior Steward of the Jockey Club between 1981 and 1983.

Educated at University College School in London, Freedman served in the Royal Artillery TA during the Second World War. In 1946 he set up Ravensfield Properties, which was taken over by Land Securities plc in 1955. He was chairman of Land Securities between 1958 and 1977. It was during this period that he developed a hankering to own racehorses, which was his idea of a relaxing pastime to take him away from the stresses of business.

Freedman's boundless energy ensured that he pursued an active role in public life. This took him on to the Race Relations Board between 1968 and 1977, and he was appointed CBE in 1978 for his services to race relations. Once asked what of her owner's great flair for nama racehorse-owning property dealer was doing on the Race Relations Board, he replied: "Had it occurred to you that I might be interested in the dignity of mankind?"

In addition he was President of

LOUIS FREEDMAN was a self- the National Association of Property Owners: Special Trustee of St Bartholomew's Hospital in 1974; Vice-Chairman of the North East Thames Regional Health Authority, Race Relations Board and numer- 1975-79; Chairman of the Camden and Islington Area Health Authority, 1979-82; and Chairman of City &

Freedman's first taste of suc-It was his passion for the thor- cess at the top level in racing was with a colt called I Say, who finished third behind the mighty Sea Bird II in the 1965 Derby and went on to win the following year's Coronation Cup.

On the advice of his great friend Peter Willett, who is acknowledged as one of the great authorities on bloodstock breeding, Freedman bought the fillies Lucyrowe and Seventh Bride. Lucyrowe carried all before her to win a string of top fillies' races including the Coronation Stakes, Sun Chariot Stakes and the Nassau Stakes, in which she beat Seventh Bride in a memorable finish.

In 1966 Freedman bought Cliveden Stud, which had been established back in 1906 by the second Viscount Astor, and started his own breeding operation. Two years later he purchased Beech House Stud in Newmarket from Lady Sassoon. Attica Meli, whom he had ac-

> 'Had it occurred to you that I might be interested in the dignity of mankind?'

quired from the Sassoon bloodstock, won the Yorkshire Oaks, Park Hill Stakes and the Princess Royal Stakes in 1972. Freedman's first Classic success came with his homebred filly Polygamy who won the 1974 Oaks and was a wonderful example ing his horses, being by Reform out of Seventh Bride.

During that same year another filly, Mil's Bomb, carried the yellow and black silks with great success. winning the Lancashire Oaks, Nas-



Freedman, centre, after the Derby in 1987, which he won with Reference Point, ridden by the American jockey Steve Cauthen

Philip Barlow

sau Stakes and Park Hill Stakes. With his horses well to the fore Freedman decided to sell Beech House and concentrate his breeding interests at Cliveden.

By this time Henry Cecil had taken over the training of the Freedman horses from Peter Walwyn and in 1986 he produced Reference Point to run away with the William Hill Futurity, one of the top races confined to two-year-olds.

Freedman, something of a traditionalist, had harboured dreams of ful ride from the American jockey

2,000 Guineas, Derby and St Leger. In Reference Point he was convinced that if ever there was a modern-day Triple Crown winner he was it. Then in the spring of 1987 Reference Point contracted a serious sinus infection which precluded him from taking part in the Guineas.

But the colt was back in time to win York's Dante Stakes before leading all the way for a famous victory in the Derby under a master-

winning the Triple Crown - the Steve Cauthen. Reference Point would benefit from being run by a went on to further glory in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot and duly won the

> The following year Freedman transferred the ownership of all his bloodstock to Cliveden Stud Company when his younger son Philip, a merchant banker and chairman of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association, took over the reins of the operation. At the time he said

younger man, though it transpired later that Freedman had become disillusioned after an article in The People newspaper earlier in 1988 had made allegations that he had been party to an illegal deal with Lester Piggott about the jockey's retainer.

Louis Freedman was so upset by the whole affair that he reduced his public involvement in racing. At the subsequent libel case with The Peothat his breeding and bloodstock ple an out-of-court settlement was Berkshire 21 December 1998.

agreed, with Freedman receiving substantial damages and costs which were believed to be in the region of £300,000.

TIM RICHARDS

Louis Freedman, property dealer and racehorse owner and breeder: born 5 February 1917; CBE 1978; married 1944 Cara Abrahamson (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved), 1960 Valerie Clarke (one son); died Cliveden,

was suffering from indifferent health

and he retired early, in 1982. This en-

abled him to enjoy once again his

academic pursuits and travel and

more particularly, his beloved gar-

Quiet interjections

PHILIP BARLOW moved into art to occupy him in building up the and design education from the museum services in the early Sixties, at the time when the recommendations of the Coldstream Report on advanced courses in art and design were about to be implemented. One of the recommendations required that studies in history of art and complementary (academic) studies were to form a fundamental element of all courses.

In 1962 Barlow was appointed to be the first Head of the School established to provide these studies at Birmingham College of Art and Design - which in 1970 became Birmingham Polytechnic, and is now the University of Central England. For him it was a move that was to be immensely rewarding and which was

school, its staffing and its work and eventually full-time courses, over the

To this work he brought a refreshingly different approach at the onset of this unique period of change in art education. No one could have been better qualified to introduce the new ideas necessary or to create the working relationships with staff in other departments essential for the success of these studies.

Gentle, likeable and with great understanding, he expanded the experience and perception of both students and staff through his influence. His particular teaching interests were in 19th-century French painting, Far Eastern art, the history of graphic design (he researched

19th-century illustrated magazines) and art since 1920. His ability to instil his love of learning in others was remarkable. He could propound and develop broad ideas in terms which were pitched with precision to develop students' understanding; while his quiet interjections solved many

during staff committee meetings. Born in St Helens, Lancashire, in 1924. Barlow read Philosophy at Birmingham University. His studies were interrupted by service in the Second World War, in which he was wounded. Completing the course after the war, he obtained his degree in 1949 and took an academic diploma in History of Art in 1952 at the

seemingly intractable problems

Courtauld Institute in London. He was briefly Assistant Keeper of Art at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, and became Assistant Keeper of Art at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, in 1953, a post he held until his appointment to Birmingham College of Art and

He was a member of the History of Art and Complementary Studies Subject Board and of the Creative and Performing Arts Board of the Council for National Academic Awards, and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of Art Historians and chairman of its Art Education Group from

Among his many publications were "Haydon and the Radicals" for the Burlington Magazine (1957); "Richard Wilson" for The Connois-

ies" for Liberal Education (1968); contributions to the Oxford Junior Encyclopaedia (passim, 1954 and 1964); Catalogue of Oil Paintings, National Museum of Wales (1954, with John Steegman); and exhibition catalogues for the Arts Council Welsh Office (Dutch Genre Paintings, 1956, How Impressionism Began, 1956, British Art and the Modern Movement, with Alan Bowness. 1962) and the National Muse-

seur (1957); "Complementary Stud-

Landscape, 1960). By the end of the 1970s the cares and stresses of departmental management at Birmingham proliferated, and beset him with problems which took him away frequently

den, magnificently set high on the Lickey Hills. This he tended with the same loving care that he had devoted to his teaching and to his students. PETER L. FIELD Philip John Barlow, art historian; born St Helens, Lancashire 11 um of Wales (Ideal and Classical

August 1924: Head of the School of History of Art and Complementary Studies, Birmingham College of Art and Design (later Birmingham Polytechnic) 1962-82; married 1951 Eve Young (one daughter); died Redditch, Worcestershire 21 from his teaching. By now, too, he November 1998.

GAZETTE

Announcements for MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries. In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Marriages). which must be submitted in writing, are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY: The Household **Cavalry Mounted Regiment** mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards. TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Mr Earle Brown, composer, 72; Mr Stephen Brown, ampassador to Korea, 53; Captain George Burnet, Lord-Lieutenant of Midlothian, 71; Professor Sir Colin Campbell, Vice-Chancellor, Nottingham University, 54; Sir Christopher Hewetson, former President of the Law Society, 69; Mr Rohan Kanhai, former West Indian cricketer, 63; Mr Eric Kinder, chairman, Smith and Nephew, 71: Professor Thea King, professor, Guildhall School of Music, 73; Miss Jane Lapotaire, actress, 54; Mr David Perry, chairman, John Waddington, 61; Mr Denis Quilley, actor, 71; Mr Richard Skinner, disc jockey, 47.

TOMORROW: Mrs Irene Adams MP, 51; Mr Hugh Arbuthnott, former ambassador to Denmark, 62; Mrs Anne Armstrong, company director and former US ambassador to Britain, 71: Viscount Astor, former government minister, 47; Sir

chairman, 77; M Gerard Depardieu, actor, 50; Lord Griffiths of Fforestfach, banking and finance authority, 57; Air Chief Marshal Sir Derek Hodgkinson, former Air Secretary, 81; Mr Mick Jones, rock musician, 57; Viscount Knutsford, former SW Regional Director, Barclays Bank, 72; Miss Pat Moss, former rally driver, 64; Professor Donald Northcote, plant biochemist, 77; Mr Mike Pender, rock singer, 56; Dr Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Léon, President of Mexico, 47; Sir William Purves, chairman, Midland Bank, 67; Mr Peter Quaife, rock musician, 55; Professor Brinley Rees. classical scholar, 79: Sir Norman Reid, former Director of the Tate Gallery, 83; Dr Edward Salthouse, Master, University College, Durham, 63; Lord Sterling of Plaistow, chairman, P & O, 64; Miss Janet Street-Porter, broadcaster, 52; Miss Polly Toynbee, journalist and broadcaster, 52; The Right Rev Michael Turnbull,

Bishop of Durham, 63.

Gordon Brunton, company

Post Gazette announcements to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, telephone 0171-293 2012 or fax to 0171-293 2010. Please give a daytime telephone number.

Even martyrdom is a family affair

FOR AS long as I can remember. Christmas Day and Boxing Day have been cosy days. In the little Yorkshire village where I was brought up the Methodist Chapel was the only place of worship, and in those days, in common with most such chapels, there was no service on Christmas Day. So there was not even the obligation of attending a service to drive us out of the family home. We ate together and afterwards sang carols in four-part harmony around the piano in the sitting room. My favourite carol, then as now, was "Christians Awake", by the 18th-century poet and hymnist John Byrom, whose final verse begins:

Then may we hope, the angelic hosts To sing, redeemed, a glad triumphal

On these two days of the year the warmth of family excluded almost

anything else. It was while I was still at school that I began to wonder whether it was quite proper that as a Christian I should mark the Incarnation of the Son of God in such an indulgent sort of way. I read T.S. Eliat's Murder in the Cathedral, where, in his Christmas Day sermon, the Archbishop talks about celebrating, in the Mass, the birth and death of Jesus on the same day. If this baby in Bethlehem was born to die, then perhaps Christmas was not the time to feel cosy after all. Of course, by the time Christmas Day and Boxing Day came round, such mid-year scruples were forgotten and I enjoyed the days as ever.

MEANINGS OF CHRISTMAS

BRUCE DEAKIN

The cosy nature of this season's celebrations is not some secular deviation from a true theology. For blood is a bond, as

well as a price to be paid

The next serious challenge came from the radical preachers of the Sixties. They told us very strongly that there was nothing nice about the birth of Jesus. The child was born out of wedlock, no one wanted the hapless parents, the manger was a stinking hole round the back and the shepherds were a rotten bunch of outcasts, that is, if you believed any of it anyway. Perhaps the proper way to celebrate Christmas was in sackcloth and ashes,

not in the comfort of a family party. Even so, there seemed no reason, as a teenager, to have any qualms about the indulgence on Boxing Day however. There was nothing religious about that to disturb my equilibrium. Until, that is, I took an interest in Lectionaries and discovered that Boxing Day is the Feast of St Stephen. What perverse thinking could have led those

stoning of the first Christian martyr the day after celebrating the birth of his Lord? Stephen had been brought before the Sanhedrin on a trumped-up charge of speaking against Moses and against God. He does his cause little good by accusing the authorities of being "stubborn, with heathen hearts. and deaf to God's message". Then, to cap it all, he tells the Council, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right-hand side of God." In their anger they proceed to butcher him by stoning.

Initially I supposed that the placing of the celebration of St Stephen's Day the day after Christmas was a historical coincidence. But, of course, this is not the case. The commemoration of the death of the first martyr is not a sort of minor Good Friday which the lectionary has slotted into a conveniently quiet day. And its emphasis is not on the "suffering" of martyrdom. It is true that the prayer of the dying Stephen, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them", echoes the prayer of Jesus upon the Cross but the emphasis of today's liturgy is of that vision of Stephen's and his prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This is the celebration of one who arrived at the ultimate home wearing the martyr's crown and who rests welcomed in his divine Father's arms. Compare this with the interweaving of salvation and rejoicing in that Byrom carol and one sees a clear link between

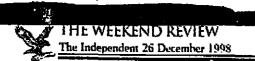
Christmas and the feast of St Stephen. The Christian apologists, who emearly Christians to celebrate the phasise the harsh, even cruel, side to

the Bethlehem story, have not got it wrong. It is about God struggling to find a place in a harsh world that has little time or space for Him. But at the end of the day the baby did find warmth, comfort and a family to support him, otherwise he would never have survived. Which is why it is, indeed, a fitting tradition to mark Christmas Day with a family celebration.

St Stephen's Day celebrates a final family reunion, the martyred Stephen with God the Father and his risen Lord. Christmas Day and Boxing Day, the Birth of our Lord and the garlanding (stephonos) of the first martyr, are family days. To say this is not a theological conceit. As anyone who, at this time of year, is involved in ministering to the elderly will tell you, the greatest, perhaps the only, joy which the season brings to many lonely people is the treasured memories of Christmases gone by, cheered by the recollection of loved ones now dead. The only thing that many have to look forward to is that final family feast of which St Stephen's Day speaks. Just as the Eucharist is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet and a sacrament on the way to it, so our Christmas Day and Boxing Day indulgence may yet prove to be a foretaste of a greater family reunion.

For many, and certainly for me, knowing that is a help and comfort on

The Rev Bruce Deakin is a Methodist minister in Haydock,



Loch, stalk and smoking barrels



George Coyne: 'We're not trying to stop people coming into the hills. But deer can be an estate's survival. If we don't have a herd, I might not have a job'

Hillwalkers and red-deer stalkers are clashing on the estates of the Scottish Highlands. By Stephen Goodwin

vo rifle shots rupture the blustery sound of a stiff breeze through stalking, crawling and lying flat on cold, boggy ground come to an end. Emma Paterson has bagged her first red deer of the hind season, an eight-year-old "yeld", without a calf this year, and a scrawny youngster of a few months that George, the stalker, thinks would not have lasted the winter.

It was not exactly a day of glori-port in the imagined high Victorian tradition; more a demonstration of an all-weather rural skill, like shepherding. Mrs Paterson, 46, did not leap up exultant. though she took a quiet satisfaction in achieving two clean kills at a range of about 120 yards while hav- er focus when Scotland gets its ing a newspaper reporter and photographer just over her shoulder.

For a few minutes after the shots we barely moved. George Coyne, 55. stalker on the 18,000-acre Auchlyne estate in Glen Dochart for the low so the rest of the herd, only hessociate the lethal shots with human figures on the skyline.

"If anybody says we're cruel, they don't know what they're talkgree of repressed anger at what he feels is a general misunderstanding of the ways of sporting estates. "It was a wee thing and would have died a lingering death when the weather turned cold. We did it a mercy."

Bouncing back across the boggy lower slopes in the eight-wheel drive Argo - an all-terrain buggy with the two carcasses between the seats, he gestured at the bleak hillside and asked what, besides sheep and shooting, is it good for? It is a question various interested, and often opposing groups have been turning over in recent months and one that will come into sharpown parliament. The fate of George Coyne, archetypal stalker in his light brown tweeds and eponymous

The Edinburgh parliament will have several emotive rural issues high on its agenda when it begins work next summer - setting up natly moving away, would not as- tional parks for Loch Lomond and ers and climbers but occasionally

roam over the hills, and land reform, giving communities a bigger say in lives are managed. All the strands are linked and landowners fear they are about to be "got at". They probably are. The parliament will want to demonstrate early vigour. Striking at the preserves of aristocrats and nouveou-riche landowners sounds radical while not being much of a drain on scarce public funds. Inevitably most MSPs (Members of the Scottish Parlia-

ment) will be from urban areas, yet

even urban Scots hark back to some

mythical "Heilan' Hame" and regard

law a liberty held dear by hillwalk-

estate owners as direct descendants of the perpetrators of the Clearances. Some are. With reform staring them in the face, the lairds have become remarkably emollient. The Scottish Landowners' Federation has signed up to a proposal that the parliament hat, may be bound up in its answer. "should introduce a right of access to land and water, exercised responsibly for informal recreation and passage". This would enshrine in

parts of the Highlands, a right to disputed by landowners with a fondness for intimidatory warning notices about high-velocity rifles. how the estates which dominate National parks are no longer anathto relinquish archaic feudal rights over tenancies.

Auchlyne estate will watch de-

velopments with interest. Bought from the Earls of Breadalbane in the 1880s by Emma's great-great-grandfather with a fortune founded on Crabbie's ginger wine, it straddles Glen Dochart, from the flanks of shapely Stob Binnein (1165m) and Ben More (1174m) on the south side, to Sgiath Chuil (919m) on the north. All three hills are significant to George Coyne, as each is over 3,000ft high and therefore a target "Munro"-bagging hillwalkers. Emma owns the north side of the estate and acts as "ghillie" - labourer and carcass collector - when George is stalking with a client. Her mother, Judy Bowser, owns the south and runs the home farm. But cattle, sheep and modest grouse shooting and stalking cannot keep the family in the solendour to which it grew accustomed in its heyday of ginger wine and whisky receipts.

To keep things the way they are, we are having to work hard at it from Mr Coyne and his employers are walkers and amend the public view that estate owners have let the red deer population explode to provide easy stalking.

There are 350,000 red deer in Scotland and numbers are still rising. In its recent annual report, the Deer Commission hints at using its statutory powers to intervene directly and shoot deer if peer pressure among landowners does not boost the hind cull. To George, this language smacks of Scottish Natural Heritage, the Government's distrusted environment adviser. "SNH wants to cover the whole country in bloody trees," he grumbled.

Over-grazing by red deer has stopped natural regeneration of Scots pines on the slopes of the Cairngorms, where SNH would like to see the recreation of the ancient forest of Caledon. When the National Trust acquired the 75,000-acre Mar Lodge estate on the southern Cairngorms it began a massive five-year cull, aiming to cut the herds from 3,000 to 1,650 by the millennium. "I wouldn't say we are struggling, but

Divorce needn't kill off the family Christmas. You just get more relatives. By Jack O'Sullivan

dawn to after dusk," said Stewart the west of Scotland, is in better hal-providing information to wa ance, though with mild winters, enabling deer to graze high on the hills and weaker animals to survive. numbers have to be checked. Fortyseven stags were shot on the estate in the autumn and George is hoping for a total of about 70 hinds this season (21 October to 15 February). Thirty-seven have been shot so far. whenever possible with fee-paying clients. Mainly English farmers and

£100 for a day's hind stalking. Hillwalkers can be a curse to stalkers. The "Munroist" may be oblivious to the cluster of deer in the next hollow, and the stalk of several hours it has taken the hunters to approach them. But the instant a happy wanderer breasts the ridge. the deer take off. Uncomfortably for the landowners, there is no doubt who is more important to the Highland economy. Stalking brings in £5m a year and supports 350 jobs. Venison sales are worth another £5m.

In contrast hillwalkers and

middle-class professionals, they pay

£150m and help support literally keen to strike an accord with hill- Cumming, who heads a team of four thousands of jobs. Auchlyne is a stalkers. Auchlyne, like much of leader in the "Hill Phones" scheme. where stalking is taking place. Emma is the co-ordinator for estates in Glen Dochart and Glen Lochay.

mountaineers contribute about

'We are not trying to stop people coming into the hills," said George. who has given up stalking in one popular corner. "But they need to realise the effect it could have on somebody's employment. Deer can be an estate's survival. If we don't have a berd, I might not have a job here.'

Coexistence has become the order of the day for the lairds and their employees, though not all yet heed it. In the van, George Coyne and his friend Stewart Cumming over at Mar Lodge, are having to marry conservation and access to the hills with an attitude and way of life on the sporting estates that has barely changed since Queen Victoria roamed Balmoral with John Brown. Maybe the eyebrow-raising friendship of monarch and ghillie is a lesson; surprising accommodations are possible.

Six grandparents and one happy family



carmen, Matthew and Aaron decorate their Christmas tree Keith Dobney

AT FIRST sight Aaron Middleditch's Boxing Day seems no different from that of any other six-year-old. His grandparents will arrive, laden with presents, to spend the day at his home in Essex. But while death has robbed some contemporaries of a granddad or a grandma. Aaron has the full quota plus a few to spare - in fact, six

grandparents will be there. This is a very modern tale of what happens when relationships break down. For years Aaron and his mother, Carmen, spent Christmas with her mum. Carmen had been abandoned by her partner when she became pregnant, but her story has a happy ending, and this year she married Matthew Middleditch.

The extended family united today is the result of that union. Aaron will see Matthew's parents, his adoptive grandparents, John and Susan Middleditch. Since the wedding in August, they have already started a savings account for Aaron's 21st birthday. He is their only grandchild and they have made a huge fuss of him although the idea of a "ready-made" grandson took a little getting used to.

"Normally you have time to prepare," says John, a 53-year-old army officer. "But I was dealt a fait accompli. At first we didn't even know the kind of toys he

liked. It takes a while for two old fogies like us to get on the same wavelength."

But by today, they will have made the transition. They have already had Aaron to stay at their Hampshire home, building a gingerbread house together. Today they will be bringing a duvet set and Lego.

"Dad will be down on the carpet for hours building Lego like he was with me and my brother," says Matthew, 26, also an army officer. Carmen is also delighted: Whereas I spend 10 or 15 minutes with Aaron on some activity and then get on with something else, they will spend a whole afternoon playing with him.

Carmen's parents are also dropping by: Gloria, who runs a sheltered housing scheme, and Roland. But here things get even more complicated. Carmen's parents divorced 15 years ago, so both are bringing their new partners. Gloria, from Enfield, in north London. will be with John, who worked for BT until he retired. Roland, from nearby Walthamstow, is a manager in a local factory and will bring his new wife, Larain, an office manager.

Understandably it hasn't always been easy. "When they split up, it was awkward," says Carmen. "But now mum and dad are really happy. They all get on really well. I have four siblings, so mum and dad are be more enthusiastic and committed. The

often together for family events. And their new partners get on well. And all the parents on my side get on well with Matthew's parents. They are the same age group and like to talk about the Sixties. miniskirts and stuff like that. My mum had one of those peroxide beehives in those days. They also chat about the army - Mum was in the army when she had me."

So that's Aaron's six grandparents. But harg on, there's another complication. Carmen, like Aaron, has acquired a new father. Although Roland has always been "dad" to her, he is not her natural father. "My mother split up from my natural father when I was eight," she says. "We didn't see him again. Then my mum married Roland and they had a child. Corinne, who will also be here on Boxing Day. I've never thought of her in that way - just as if Matthew and I had another child, he or she would just be a brother or a sister to Aaron."

So there will be absentees from Carmen and Matthew's open house today -Carmen's natural father and Aaron's natural father. But Aaron is not complaining. He may have six grandparents, only one of whom, Gloria, is a blood relative, but he has three granddads in Matthew, John and Roland who could not

same is true of the women in his life. All of which brings us back to the new nuclear family which was created around him when Carmen and Matthew got married. You can tell on meeting them this is a wonderful love match, albeit one that has overcome a few obstacles. For a start, there is a difference in age between 35-year-old Carmen and 26-year-old Matthew.

And you might not immediately have teamed Matthew, public school and county, with Carmen, a single mum raising Aaron on a secretary's salary. And those differences have not been completely vanquished - Aaron got football boots for Christmas, so Matthew's desire to introduce him to rugby must wait.

For Carmen and Matthew, today's open house is a way to bring everyone together while offending nobody. Carmen plans to bring out their wedding photographs to look over the amazing year that has changed so many lives.

On the day they were married, Aaron was christened in the Hampshire church where Matthew had been christened. And Aaron came with them on their honeymoon.

"This year's Christmas holiday will make everything complete," says Carmen. "This is everything I ever really wanted."

From Havana, trailing sparks

Carlos Acosta once thought ballet was for sissies. Not any more. Just watch him fly. By Nadine Meisner

seems colder when you were raised in Cuba and have spent the last five years of your career in the soupy bayou climate of Houston, Texas. In fact, Carlos Acosta seems to be having difficulty adjusting, not only to our weather, but also to the Royal Ballet. Still, he knows it is early days. He will probably feel better once he plants his feet on the Royal Festival Hall stage and takes on his first major role, as Colas in Ashton's La Fille Mal Gardée. To an outsider, he looks the anti-

thesis of British drizzle. He evokes sunshine and pleasure with his grammatically relaxed, consonant-slurring Hispanic English, his sudden gleeful laughter as he describes an enthralled visit to the V&A, his warm brown skin. He is that rarity: a black ballet dancer, one of only two (with Jerry Douglas) in the Royal Ballet. Where modern dance has both attracted and accepted all human shades, ballet - middle-class and rarefied - has deterred black children, and ballet companies have failed to welcome black dancers.

New ballet is tentatively trying to become colour-blind; and in an art form where talent - especially male talent - is scarce, directors can discover the advantage of enlarging their pool of choices. Acosta, who joined this season, is a real star for a company that has become more a collection of black holes than a galaxy of heavenly bodies.

We wait to see how well he will suit the gentle filigree of Ashton's Fille, although he has briefly dipped into Ashton before, with a secondary part in English National Bal-let's Romeo and Juliet. But, during the Royal Ballet's October-November programmes at Sadler's Wells, he astonished audiences in Raymonda Act III, partnering the exquisite Miyako Yoshjida.



Carlos Acosta: 'Here you are on your own. If you want to work, it's fine. If you don't, it's up to you'

They saw a dancer who slashes across space faster than anyone else, who lacerates the air with shapes so clear and sharp they seem to throw off sparks. He is no mere step-trickster, either: his Russian-derived Cuban training has given him elegance and subtlety.

In a country other than Cuba, where the population is racially mixed and vocational dance training is free, all the odds would have been against him. Born 25 years ago in a poor district of Havana, he was the youngest of 11 children, a kid with excess energy who played football, break-danced on the street, and stole fruit. But his father, a truck first sight of the superlative National

driver, had a neighbour whose two sons were at ballet school. He realised that such an establishment would not only curb his nine-yearold son's hyperactivity, but would also educate and feed him.

"So he enrolled me," Acosta says. "And, of course, I started to have problems because I thought ballet was sissy. I skipped the classes and exams, and when I was 13 they fired me." His persevering father found another ballet school, where he could become a boarder this time and the teachers could keep a closer watch on him. And soon afterwards, Acosta had his

Ballet of Cuba. Proud of his own physicality, he was awe-struck by the dancers' honed athleticism and determined to be like them. At the National Ballet School of

Cubs he won four competitions, including the prestigious Lausanne and Paris contests. He joined English National Ballet for the 1991-2 season, but his stint was cut short by a bone spur in his ankle. After an operation, he became a member of the Cuban Ballet, guested with the Houston Ballet and eventually transferred there permanently.

Houston, one of the US's leading companies, gave him widely varied roles. American audiences and critics went wild about him; Houston's director, the choreographer Ben Stevenson, encouraged and finetuned him.

Emma Boam

Dancers may be grateful disciples, but they are also greedy prowlers, scanning the horizon for fresh challenges. Acosta's eyes alighted on the Royal Ballet. In Houston, talking in a buzzy sushi bar, he had been full of excitement about his move, which included his girlfriend Tiekka Schofield, another Houston principal, who has opted for a freelance career. In London, at the Royal Ballet School, sitting in a maths classroom grimly crammed with empty desks, he seems anxious Royal Festival Hall on 29 Jan.

 as well he may be. Since arriving, he has been glad to learn new roles; it is what he came for But just three - Raymondo, Fille and a sup-porting part in Forsythe's In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated - a total of 11 performances in three months, is hardly a crushing schedule. "I didn't expect the special treatment I had in Houston," he says. "But I came to London to dance, and I've not had much so far."

He realises things may improve and is impressed by the company's large selection of teachers, each with a different input. But he misses Ben Stevenson's unifying presence. Stevenson is the Houston Ballet, a father guiding and driving his close-knit family, while the Royal Ballet is a looser, more international and grown-up ensemble. "In Houston everybody had to be in class every day and Ben would show you how he wanted things, how to improve. Here you are on your own. If you want to work, it's fine; if you don't, it's up to you.

"It's OK for me; I know how to get on with things. But it could be difficult sometimes, because if you do something wrong, it's much more hard for you to realise than for other people watching. I still have a lot to learn - I don't want to be the same dancer five years from now. I would like to have different tools and to find nourishment through as many roles as possible."

Like all dancers, he is preternaturally aware of the clock ticking. He has - what? - 10 or 12 years left? He has arrived at the Royal Ballet in turbulent times. Perhaps the company's recent flamboyant male defections will bring him more performances. If the Royal Ballet, in this New Labour era, are to be a People's Ballet, they would be crazy not to capitalise on the politically and artistically impeccable presence they now have in their midst. La Fille mal gardée' opens at the

Pirates at sea

SAVOY OPERA

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE THE QUEEN'S THEATRE

A SHABBY makeshift pelmet hangs over the stage of the Queen's Theatre, photographs of Gilbert and Sullivan ignominiously displayed in crumpled papier mache frames. So much for the preservation of our national treasures. Snubbed by the Arts Council of England, the future of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company - self-proclaimed guardians of the G&S tradition - has been in doubt. Questions have been asked in the House. Which is why the people's champion, Raymond Gubbay, has ridden to the rescue.

So how come this tatty seasonal revival of The Pirates of Penzance looks and behaves as if it's arrived about a century too late? How come extinction suddenly seems like a better bet than preservation? Is this the shapelessness of things to come, or one final reminder that the financial situation is indeed desperate?

Gubbay knows better than to serve up something as obviously penny-pinching as this to a West-End audience. For mise-en-scene read miserly-en-scène. Roger Kirk is credited as designer, but scenery like this isn't designed, it's discarded. Act Two is indeed "a draughty old ruin", but of what? The 1886 production of

Ruddigore, as seen from behind? Now, I love every last syllable and semi-quaver of the Savoy operas and it pains me to see them dragged out of hock in this way. You have two choices when mounting G&S today: either you preserve absolutely the style, texts, and traditions - in which case only the superlative will do - or you find ways (as witness the marvellous Miller Mikado at ENO) or sharpening up the ironies for a modern audience. Stuart Maunder's production manages neither. Rather, he recycles every cliche, every bad sight gag, in the dog-cared D'Oyly Carte manual. How funny the kneebends of the constabulary could have been, if only the gag had been better choreographed. There were too many more where that came from.

The company were full of good intentions, though Jill Pert's Ruth and Richard Suart's Major-General should have been better. As Mabe Anna-Clare Monk's soubrette was pretty enough, while Christopher Saunders gave us a sweetly sum Frederic. Their Act Two duet was the musical highlight of the evening - by which time our ears had adjusted to the somewhat weedy, though well

deployed, nine-piece orchestra. Biggest laugh of the evening.
"With all our heart, we love our House of Peers." Not for much longer. Be warned, D'Oyly Carte.

THE YEAR IN RADIO

ROBERT HANKS

THE NAME of Theodore Sturgeon is unfamiliar to most people - a few will remember him as the author of the classic saga of man versus malign machine, Killdozer - but in the late Fifties he formulated one of the most important intellectual principles of this century. Defending science fiction against its detractors, he admitted that 90 per cent of the genre was crap. But, he pointed out. "90 per cent of everything is crap". This

worrying truth has sometimes been called Sturgeon's Law: and it is something reviewers and readers of reviews should always bear in mind.

When you come to make your list of the highs and lows of the radio year, the lows. naturally, will vastly outnumber the highs. Excellence is hard to achieve: mediocrity and idiocy come cheap. So what?

But, slice it anywhere you like, this does seem to have been a particularly bad year

for radio. Radio 1, having briefly enjoyed the most creative line-up for years, succumbed to a bad attack of the ratings collywobbles, shot Kershaw off to the wee small hours and signed Zoe Ball as its headline act. Similarly, Talk Radio experimented briefly with a slightly more intellectually challenging approach before Kelvin MacKenzie took over and propelled it into a new blokishness. Radio 3's

daytime schedules saw

music in full retreat from a



barrage of anecdotes and

Most depressing of all has been Radio 4, where the cleaning out of the old schedules - a worthy

ambition in itself - was accompanied by a ludicrous new commissioning system and an extraordinarily wasteful attitude to talent and knowledge.

Not everything this system has produced has been bad – looking through the files, I realise I never proclaimed publicly that King Stupid was a brilliant panel game. Against that, though, you have to set the mindlessness of Only Connect and I'm Glad You

Asked Me That. And surely

no serial drama has been as relentlessly dreary as Under One Roof: no phonein as pointless or disorganised as Veg Talk.

Even the best things have sometimes had their disheartening side: no original radio drama has had one quarter the impact of Conor McPherson's The Weir or David Hare's monologue, Via Dolorosa. which both transferred from

the West End to Radio 3. Towards the end of this year there have been signs of a change for the better notably the appointment of Roger Wright as controller of Radio 3. But it has been an anxious year: one that has shown the BBC running scared of audiences and governments, and commercial radio, by and large, unwilling to play

anything but safe. So farewell to 1998; and for me. farewell to writing about radio. As of the new year Γll he on the back page, turning square-eyed in front of the television set.

NEXT WEEKEND IN THE REVIEW



Magnus Mills joins 'The Independent'

The Booker Prize nominee begins his new radio column on next **Saturday's Arts page**



The fairy tale comes true

HERE'S ANOTHER Nutcracker arrived for Christmas, and a jolly good one too. Every production has Tchaikovsky's music as its starting-point and greatest asset, but this one, by Birmingham Royal Ballet, has the benefit of the Royal Ballet Sinfonia in the orchestra pit with Barry Wordsworth to conduct them, and you might be surprised what a difference

Advantage number two: there is not a gimmick in sight, unless you count the conjuring tricks interspersed throughout the action, and I reckon they are a bonus to Peter Wright's beautifully straightforward staging. He makes more sense of the simple story than most producers, and even keeps emotional interest going through the generally plotless second half by letting the heroine, Clara, take part in almost all the dances.

There is real choreography, too, the kind where the steps make attractive and meaningful patterns that relate to each other and to the music. Not to mention bold and apt designs by John Mactarlane.

Having just completed a successful run in its Birmingham home, the company arrives in London to show how apt the Lyceum is for ballet, even though it has not been used as such since 1931. To move about within the building proves complex, and redecoration has been done too much on the cheap, but the stage looks good. Are the Covent Garden companies

DANCE THE NUTCRACKER BIRMINGHAM ROYAL

BALLET LYCEUM. LONDON kicking themselves for rejecting it as a temporary home? BRB, widely thought the best ballet company in Britain now, offers a multiplicity of

casts during its three-week London season. For an idea of its present strength, I hope you watched its alternative production, The Nutcracker Sweeties (to the jazz adaptation of Trhaikovsky by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn: on BBC2 yesterday afternoon. The liveliness and zest these dancers brought to tele-

vision is equally apparent on stage in the real Nutcracker. Sandra Madgwick took the lead on opening night as the most adorable, fresh and vivacious Clara I can imagine. As the Sugar Plum Fairy, Sabrina Lenzi had a brief but very pretty entry at the ballet's end, dancing her duet and solo with lovely assured line and a radiant smile.

Joseph Cipolla brought charm and perfect timing to the magician Drosselmeyer, and others who stood out were Timothy Cross as Clara's dancing partner, Robert Parker as a bounding Jack-in-the Box, and the four delicious Mirliton girls. But this is a company strong from top to bottom, worth seeing who-

JOHN PERCIVAL



'A Nor'Easter bang on Christmas Day and the in-laws are comin for dinner. First time in thirty years they're gonna sit at my table. They figure that at forty-five I'm mature enough to handle the responsibility'

New England Four feet of snow: 20 below zero plus the wind-chill factor. Arctic air that freezes the inside of your nose so's it hurts to breathe, and your face feels like it's in a plaster cast.

Nineteen eighty-seven's a doozie. A Nor Easter bang on Christmas Day and the in-laws are comin for dinner. First time in 30 years they're gonna sit at my table. They figure at 45 I'm mature enough to handle the responsibility. And I'm a grandmother for Christ's sake.

There's Crowley's Uncle Frank and Frank's sisters Lizzie and Sadie. plus Minnie, Sadie's best friend. The Aunts live with Lizzie's husband Pat in a big old house in Portsmouth. I tease Pat about his har-eem. Three pint-sized women who went into the factories at 13 and came out at 65, which explains their take on life. That and the Catholic Church. Minnie's a little cutie but deaf as a post. She and Sadie shared an apartment then moved into Lizzie's house to save money.

Lizzie's a lot nicer since she went crazy. Like a giggly little girl; loves everyone and laughs at everything... Don't care if she don't know what day it is. Sadie's a spinster, real religious and a pain in the butt. She's kep her sanity all right. Remembers everything you want like hell to forget.

Well that's the Aunts and there's poor Pat tryin to stay out the way of their dust mops. He's a sweetheart, always been my pal. Never held my little Ricky against me like them other prudes.

Pat's no beauty, bless his heart, with that big bald head and four missing teeth and one leg shorter'n the other so's he has to wear a black boot with a humungus four inch heel. Had to leave the police force because of it, but he got what he called a "position" as attendant at the public conveniences on Washington Street.

He's always settin in his arm chair, the orthopedic boot crossed ever the good foot, chilling out with a fat cigar and blowin smoke the length of the parlour. He keeps real clear of the "Mutterin Zone" where the women say their rosaries while they watch the news and soaps and quizshows. They all sing along with the commercials which is kinda sweet, but that mutterin drives Pat bananas. And no more cigars since the cancer. Crowley hardly talks to him cept about ball games. No generosity of spirit. But it ain't all his fault.

NYWAYS, HERE I am. It's 11:30 Christmas morning and the dinner's steamin and bubblin in the dream kitchen I waited 13 years for. Crowley's in a grump shovelin out the driveway. Snow's blowin sideways. nearly horizontal, and that's a real bad sign.

Briring. The telephone goes. "That you, Gerry?" "Well hi there Sadie. Merry

₩hat?"

Have you looked outside?" "Course I looked." You seen that snow?" "I seen it."

His stomach's not too good this mornin anyways." Pat's got a apparatus, which is

what you're supposed to call a colostomy bag these days. "But what'll you guys eat?"

"We got a loaf of bread and some cream of mushroom soup. You watch the mass from the Vatican this mornin?" "Yes." I lied. 'Wasn't it grand? Just beautiful."

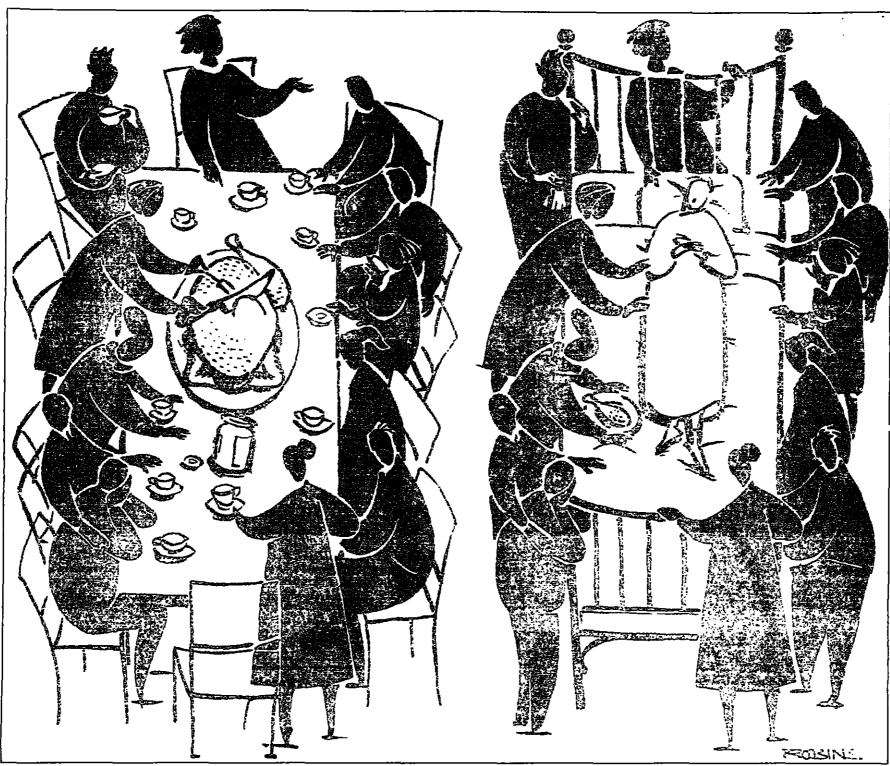
"Sadie, I got all this food here." "Well we ain't riskin our lives." "Yeah, but -" "Merry Christmas." I try real hard to love Sadie, but sometimes I'd like to wring her

chicken neck. Enter my husband, covered in white and stompin his big ugly boots all over the carpet.

"Hey Crowley!" I yells. 'What's matter now?' "I just vacuumed that."

"Christ, it's only water." "It is not. There's all mud in it. Look." "Can it Geraldine." I tell him Portsmouth ain't comin.

It don't improve his mood none, and he locks himself in the bedroom and Itens to old Dylan records, Michael Emmet Crowley cannot handle rejection. Well, he's a poor orphan Turkey on White A NEW SHORT STORY BY MARY FLANAGAN



boy who don't know who his real Daddy was and that's a tough one. Never shows much gratitude to Lizzie and Pat, though they raised him like he was their own instead of the fatherless babe of their distant cousin who died of TB. They doted on their Mikey. Suckers for them blue eyes and brown curls, sayin he looked like the Christ Child. "The Light of the World", ho, ho, ho. Well there ain't many curls now and he's weighin in at 230.

"Well Pat ain't drivin in that stuff. I CALL Frank case he ain't comin neither.

"Don't vou worry. Ger. we'll give you a hand with that turkey."

He's pretty cheerful considerin Nora died last June, poor little bird, and Frank ain't cut out to be a widower. Won't eat. Won't socialise. And Moira's in New York most the time. So I'm admiring my 20 pound

turkey and feelin kinda proud. Thought I'd try something different this year, maybe along Tex-Mex lines. I like to experiment. Keeps me young. I found this recipe for hamburger stuffin in Family Circle and sorta improvised. (Crowley'll moan about the chillies, but that's too bad.) I used Worcestershire sauce, I mean a lot. Then on an impulse I added sugar, only the bowl slipped outa my hand, so I balanced out the sweetness with some vinegar and that was better. I poured in a can of tomato soup, but the mixture looked awful loose, not like Nora's or Lizzie's.

Well, I won't tell you what it reminded me of. But I says to myself no regrets, Geraldine, and went on merrily rammin it into the cavity. In the end it looked pretty good. Only wish Nora could see it. She

cause I come from a measley old farm upstate and talk like a hick and got pregnant at 15. Oh yeah, they all blamed me not Crowley. But Nora the kids. She was a tad jealous cause I had five and she only pro-

She looked down on me a little

Hi there Lizzie. And a Happy Christwas a lady. Always good to me and mas to you too. Yuh... yuh. Mikey's eaten all his dinner. Oookay. Merry duced Moira, which is why Moira's Christmas, Sweetheart... Sadie? spoiled like Crowley, but she's a good Well? Okay we'll be right down. Course I got snow treads. Get em kid really. Likes me. Thinks I'm a riot and a half, and that burned her mothevery year, first of November. You er up as well. I was a little too down

He hangs up. I can hear him sayin their rosaries.

we're waitin for an H Bomb to hit.

"Well check again. Yuh, I'll wait...

pleased.

Sadie?" Frank don't sound too road and I grab the wheel and he pulls hisself together.

Everyone's listenin, tense like "Crowley, this is gettin hairy." "I'll drive Dad." says my Kevin in the back seat with Kelly and the turkey. "The hell you will." When we get to Lizzie's house I'm

shakin like a leaf, part from the cold, part from the drive and part cause I'm spooked out by corpses. Inside the heatin's at 82 degrees

and the TV's blastin out carols The girls are at the kitchen table

'The snow's still blowin ... Face it guys, we're stuck here for the night with a turkey, a corpse

WELL, IT'S two o'clock and we're breathing. He looks at us all all settin round the table, Frank and Moira, Kevin, my second, Kathy, my third, and Kelly my ten-year-old baby. Then comes my big moment and I bring on the turkey. (It was all red around the bones, so I covered it up with some mashed turnips, only the red's showin through now, but that don't matter much.) Conversation ain't exactly lively cept for Moira and me, but it improves with Crowley's red wine. Can't stand the stuff myself. Tastes like wet ashes.

I notice people ain't exactly tuckin into the food like they normally do. Frank's hardly touched his, but I put it down to a bad Nora day. I keep askin if they want seconds and no one does, so I help myself. Tastes pretty good to me. What's the matter with everybody?

Brrrng. Telephone. Crowley answers. Sadie wants to speak to her never thought I had the equipment. brother, "Are you sure about this and a loony tune' "Pat died." Frank collapses into Crowley's

chair. "Can you beat that?" Nobody says anything. The lump in my stomach's risin un to behind my eyes when Crowley starts blubberin and sobbin like I never seen him. Grand Coulee Dam, I swear. Me and the kids all hug him and blubber along and I feel real bad for him. Then something mean in me says I betcha Crowley thought Pat would tell him one day, about his real father's grave an all those two buttoned-up bitches won't never spill the beans. Ashamed of the

scandal. Forgive me God. Portsmouth's only twelve miles from us, but in a blizzard that's a ways away. We're followin Frank's Galaxy at about 25 miles an hour. I've got my legs crossed tight, my fists bunched and my teeth grit. Crowley keeps cryin till he slews off the

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"Merry Christmas!" Lizzie jumps up and starts waving her arms in the air and kissing everyone. Then she goes and gets a big box of chocolates and starts handin them round. She

sure is havin a flamboyant senility. What you come all this way for? Sadie barks at Frank. "You coulde had an accident then what'd we do? Frank sighs. "Where is he?"

"Upstairs. On the bed." "How'd you get him up there?"

"I told you. He went by hisself. He wouldn't eat no lunch. Said he was gonna lie down. At two Min went to check on him and he was gone." "Where's Pat? Pat, you want a

"Lizzie don't *know*?" I says can't keep nothin straight in her brain." Sadie pretty wound up. Her mouth's a tight white line and her

chocolate?" "She's knows all right, only she

hands a tremblin. "Lizzie, for the last

undertaker who's passed out in front of Indiana Jones. Lizzie's yellin into Pat's face. "Speak to me, Pat," over and over. Then she starts mutterin into her Missal. Moira closes Pat's eyes. Outside the snow's swirlin

off. Frank's on the phone to the

around the streetlights and cars look like hibernatin polar bears. There's that weird quiet you only get in snow storms. Meanwhile Lizzie's at Pat's eyes again. "Wake up, Pat. It's time to go home.'

Please, Aunt Lizzie. He's dead." Then Lizzie's fiddlin with the curtains, sayin she's gonna shorten em two inches. Moira closes her uncle's eyes, cept Lizzie only opens em again and Moira starts crying. The situation's pretty hopeless, then suddenly Frank gets hold of the undertaker. My heart's pounding so's it hurts when I kiss Pat goodbye.

table waitin for the undertaker and starin at that miserable lookin turkey carcass. Nobody's talking cept Lizzie who keeps askin do we want sandwiches, coffee, a Coke, a chocolate, a warm sweater, then goes off the parlour and comes back.

WELL WE'RE all back at the kitchen

"Pat, come watch the ice skating." "Pat's dead, Lizzie," Sadie hollers. You seen him upstairs lyin on the bed.

"I did? Was he takin a nap?" "No he wasn't, he was dead. God

took him. "Where'd he take him?"

"To heaven, Elizabeth." She just ain't gonna lay off. She thinks if she just keeps on badgerin Lizzie the poor little bird'll remember. Which makes me wonder who's the crazy around here.

"Hey Sadie," says Crowley, "cool it." "Yeah, give her a break, "Frank

Sadie's lookin pretty desperate. "But she's gotta understand." "She won't never understand."

"Then God help us." Everything's real quiet cept for the snowplough goin past, and I thinks what the bell and starts pickin at the turkey and next thing I know Frank's at it too then Minnie and my kids and Crowley and even Sadie. Lizzie yanks off a leg and takes it up to Pat cause he ain't eaten nothin since breakfast. Sadie puts

her face in ber hands. The snow's still blowin. It's level with the window ledge now. Face it, guys, we're stuck here for the night with a turkey, a corpse and a loony tune. But hey, there's a knock at the door and it's Tom the undertaker. Sadie jumps up. "Come on in, Tom. Merry Christmas. You gonna have some turkey with us?"

"I won't say no. Sadie. I'm awful sorry about Pat."

Sadie gets out the Wonderbread and the large economy size Hellman's, and what do you know, we're all makin sandwiches. Tom says he'll have some coffee, so everyone has coffee and pretty soon we're tellin stories about deaths and wakes and funerals, and some of them are pretty funny and even Sadie laughs a couple times. "You know, Gerry," she says, "this is real good turkey."

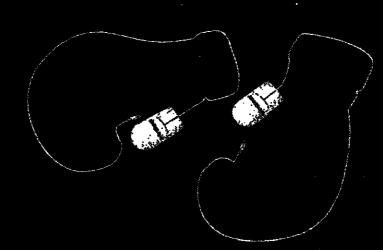
IT'S THE day of the funeral and the sun's shinin bright and cold. Father Roach is mutterin over the grave and Lizzie's starin at the casket and I think maybe just for a minute she knows she's a widow. Crowley's starin at it too, thinkin maybe about the other grave, the one he was so gung-ho to find, only now he understands Pat was more his father all along, so he'll be stewin in his own juice over that for a while.

They're only pretending to bury Pat cause the ground's too frozen hard to dig, so he'll have to stay in the mausoleum til April. Don't like the thought of him stacked up with all the other unburieds. I'll sure rest easier when he's six feet under. He had a good death spite of the rumpus he caused, God love him. An easy death for a good man. There's some justice anyways.

Mary Flanagan's latest novel is 'Adele' (Bloomsbury, £6.99)

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time, Pat's dead."

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"He is?" "You seen him Lizzie."

Pat! Pat!" She's off up the stairs two

at a time with the box of chocolates.

Frank's right behind her, then Moira.

"Jeeze. Ma. Old People."

so damned wired.

puts in my two cents.

Minnie." "What, dear?"

No. no. stop it, please.

molester

his relish.

My Kelly's eyes are like saucers.

Crowley's real morose. Probably

wants a beer, but Sadie keeps a dry

house. Course he's not liftin a finger

to help poor Frank who's in charge

whether he wants to be or not. Just

sits there like a big helpless kid. And

the rest of us ain't much better.

Shock, I guess, Sadie's makin coffee

as usual. No wonder them three are

I ask does anyone want some

"Pat liked turkey sandwiches on

"With lots of mayonnaise." Sadie

"He liked cranberry relish too." I

"Not on turkey sandwiches!"

"He liked his turkey," says Min in

"Yes, but not on sandwiches.

Think I'm better off upstairs with

the deceased than down here in

Wonderland, I pull myself together

and climb the creepy stairs. I can hear

Moira soundin pretty stressed-out. "Please, Aunt Lizzie, don't do that.

I'm standin in the bedroom door-

way and oh boy there's poor Pat gone

to the last roundup, wearing his or-

thopedic boot and a white undershirt

with purple suspenders. Lizzie's

bendin over holdin his evelids open

and Moira's behind tryin to drag her

Sadie acts like I called him a child

a little sing-song voice. "And he liked

corrects her like she done for 50 years.

turkey, but no one's innerested.

white bread," Minnie pipes up.

"Well why didn't nobody tell me?

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books for everyone

By heavens, when do you plant?

Should you sow by the light of the moon or plan according to the rhythms of the sun? Anna Pavord gazes skyward, intrigued

tidied the duster box recently. Don't ask me why. I can only think that it was a way of putting off the more gruesome tasks that took me to the duster box in the first place: blackleading the grates, cleaning the brass. But as a symbol of the transitoriness of things, nothing could be more potent.

Take Shaky. There was a time when one of the children's bedrooms was a shrine to the pop star Shakin' Stevens. In the duster box was embarrassing proof of her obsession: half of a red sweatshirt. with "Shaky" emblazoned on the front. She must have been very young at the time (at least, that will be her excuse) because it is a very small sweatshirt.

The remnant of a hideously shaming dress was my own. Well, the Seventies were weird, but were they really this weird? And yet this dress, with its brilliant, psychedelic swirls of shocking pink, magenta and orange, was once the star of my wardrobe. Now it was one of the few rags in the box that actually looked better encrusted with Brasso than it did in its original state. There is nothing more transitory

than fashion. That is the point of it, that it moves on all the time. Clothes and pop stars are more at its mercy than gardens, though there have been some high-spirited attempts to subjugate gardening to the cause. The difficulty is that gardens won't stay where they are put. This is a nightmare for stylists. The only way out is to get rid of anything that grows, and spread crushed car windscreens where the grass should be. Crushed car windscreen is the gravel of the Nineties.

Transitoriness provides excitement and freshness in a garden. Sometimes it is a style thing, a craze for a certain colour, such as the brilliant blue that is in vogue in gardens at the moment. There are styles in plants. Hostas used to be stylish, but aren't any more. Hellebores are certainly stylish. So are certain sorts of primroses. Daffodils have never yet made the leap.

There is an inbuilt transitoriness in gardens. too, created by the ebb and flow of seasonal plants. Jasmine and viburnum have taken over from the consequence those changes the summer's roses. New views have on plants - no one can garden open up as leaves fall from the trees. And each year gardeners in- deed, they may be why we took to troduce different playes into the gardening in the first place. garden picture, some of them perbeetroot in our vegetable arden this year. I enjoyed that sh. w, but it is more fun to plan a different performance there next year than to re-

But underpinning these fleeting effects in a garden is a foundation of enormous strength and stability. The resilience and timelessness of gardens, the slow growth of trees, the immutable change of autumn into winter and winter into spring, side. Colder, but better.



and remain unaware of these. In-

haps never intended as Lermanent strength is one of the things that mania. My own theory about this fixtures. Marigolds, fo: instance, makes gardening important to me. (you have to have a theory in the feeling. When I wander out through the back door to do some casual weeding I do not say, "Fancy that. I am part of the great diurnal round." while you are there, gazing at the silhouette of the mahonia in the dusk and the sun sets, bleeding across the sky with the savage intensity that only happens on winter afternoons, you feel a lot better than you do in-

I don't feel I have to burrow ual". The guiding principle is not difaround in my subconscious for reasons to garden. Fortunately, nobody else seems to feel the need either. Psychologists and psychiatrists Tapping into this underlying leave us alone with our happy three days before the following new gardening itself is what keeps you out of the hands of the shrinks.

For some gardeners, the greater scheme itself becomes all-important. I just get on with the job in hand. But Instead of underpinning the calming chores of pruning and sowing and harvesting, it becomes the driving force of everything they do in the garden. Over Christmas, I puzzled over Gwydion's Planting Guide by JR Gower, which describes itself as the definitive moon-planting man-

ficult to grasp. Root vegetables should be sown, planted or transplanted in a period that starts two days before a full moon and ends moon. All other fruits and vegetables should be sown, planted or transbefore a new moon and ends three days before the following full moon.

Now, you don't necessarily have to go along with these rules (which have long been a part of gardening lore), but at least you can understand them. J.R. Gower adds a further complication: signs of the zodiac. The beneficial signs for sowing and planting are Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio. Capricorn and

signs. The trick, says Gower is to get the heavens. On 5 January, "The den, which appears alongside its the phases of the moon working properly with the movements of That means, according to the

example he gives, that tomatoes should be sown between 14 January (22.04 hrs) and 17 (8.42 hrs) or 19 Jan-(21,22hrs) and 22 (9,35hrs), I enioy the thought of JR standing with seed packet in hand, waiting, when most of us are thinking about bed, for the hand of his watch to creep round to the 04 position.

Nick Kollerstrom's Planting by the Moon is a much fuller and better designed guide to the same subject, though still wonderfully arcane. There is a generous day-to-day diary in this book, with full instruc-Pisces, all either earth or water tions on the state of play up there in

which is usually a stressful time, but is quickly followed by the trine as-Mr Kollerstrom, afternoon-only need to stay by the fire. hours just aren't an option. Will a thunderbolt strike me if I dig com-

post before noon? I do hope not, because I am intrigued (though not persuaded) by this book. It tells about cycles of the sky, and how the moon may affect fertility and crop yield. It explains the rhythms of the sun and sets out sensible principles of organic gardening. It includes a modern-day plan of work for a productive kitchen gar-

Moon has reached its north node, 18th-century equivalent, garden notes taken from Martha Bradley's The British Housewife, which was pect, which is more harmonious. first published in 1756. "December Work only in the afternoon." Oh! if is a dead season of the year for garonly I could. Afternoons are so won-dening," says the sensible Mrs derfully short in January. But, dear Bradley. That's all the excuse I

> 'Gwydion's Planting Guide' is writ-ten and published by JR Gower (£3.75). It is available from the author at 11 Summerhouse, Orchard Cottages, Bove Town, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 & IA. You can also buy the book from Counter Culture at BCM Inspire, London WC1N 3XX, (01823 698895). Planting by th Moon', by Nick Kollerstrom, published by Prospect Books, £9.99

The merry nuns of Gloucestershire

YOU MIGHT imagine that Christmas in a nunnery would be a low-key affair. But I am prepared to bet that yesterday's celebrations in the Convent of Poor Clares at Woodchester, near Stroud, were as merry as any in the land. Of course, I did not take part, for the convent is a closed order, and outsiders are not admitted to its inner sanctum; but a briefing from the Mother Abbess, Sister Mary Anthony, earlier in the week, left me in no doubt about her community's

Our talk took place in the guest parlour, and for an hour the small, plain room rang with peals of laughter as she and Sister Mary Therese, in their black veils and dark-brown habits, described their life. Most of their time is spent in silence, because this is their way of "being with God". There is normally no conversation at meals, during which one of nuns over-indulged: having no suitthe company reads - from the scriptures, from the martyrology, from a book of travel or education.

So what were they planning for Christmas? The festival began with an early midnight Mass, starting at 8pm on Christmas Eve, to which parishioners were invited. According to the Mother Abbess, these outsiders always pack into the extern chapel, which is registered for public worship, separate from the nuns' chapel, and "sing their hearts out".

On ordinary mornings the nuns get up at 5am and prostrate themselves on the wooden floors of their cells, renewing the dedication of their lives to God. But on Christmas Day they had a lie-in until 7am. Then came the Office of Readings and morning prayer, another Mass at 8.30am, then midday prayer, then Christmas lunch. And what did they eat? "Turkey and Christmas pud**COUNTRY MATTERS**



HART-DAVIS

ding, of course!" And wine? "Oh yes!" The turkey had been given by "good people", relations of a sister long deceased, and the wine by another benefactor. Not that any of the able glasses, they drank from tiny china cups, which they believe are

of Flemish origin.
In the afternoon they said the Rosary together, at 4.15pm had Vespers, and in the evening held a party in a big room upstairs, decorated with pretty papers and can-dles. Two sisters in fancy dress brought in the accumulated presents, some delivered by wellwishers, others brought practical gifts like wool or writing paper bought by the nuns themselves.

They also - treat of treats - had television. Although the convent sports an aerial, the nuns have no television set, but at Christmas and Easter they borrow one and watch carefully chosen programmes, together with any videos (also given) that are deemed suitable.

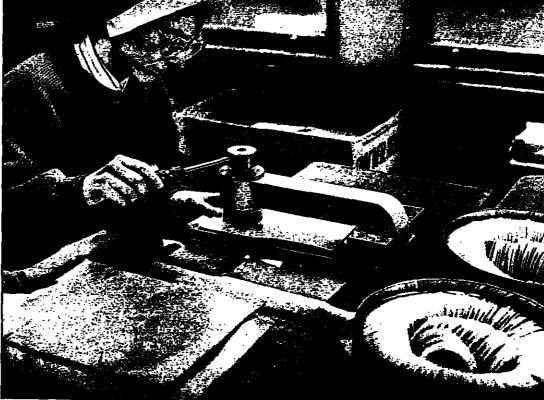
Their order, named after Saint Clare of Assisi, was founded on the

Continent in 1621, when the Catholic religion was still banned in England, and the epithet "poor" reflects their determination to follow the frugal existence led by their mentor. Saint Francis. The convent at Woodchester was built in the 1860s; at its zenith, after the Second World War, it housed 30 nuns, but now the community is down to 12, and the average age is high. The Mother Abbess has been there for 52 years, and her ace reader, Sister Frances Agnes, is 89.

The building - in Gothic style, and finely built of Cotswold stone - is a formidable size, stretching for more than 100 yards along the side of a steep valley. Eight acres of land go with it; when the community was larger and younger, the sisters kept cows, which gave them their own milk and butter. Until a fox killed the lot, they had chickens, and, until last summer, bees: Sister Frances Agnes, the resident apiarist, was dismayed when she found that her colony had flown away. She is still a dab hand at growing artichokes, and most of the sisters lend a hand in the

vegetable garden and orchard. Their main work, and principal source of income, is the production of altar breads, which they sell not only in the diocese but as far afield as the Channel Islands and Germany. The ingredients - flour and water - could not be simpler, but to achieve the right texture demands

skill and experience. The dough comes out of the bakery in sheets, which have to be damped before they can be cut by machine. The pieces are then sorted, counted and packed in purposemade boxes, before being wrapped, addressed and stamped, all by hand. Many of the orders are large -Swindon's is for 8,000 a month, and



The main source of income for the sisters is the production of altar breads

double that at Christmas and East- legacies. "We depend on divine er - and the sisters' annual output is about five million pieces, which earns them £25,000 a year.

As the Mother Abbess merrily admits, "We don't pay any wages." So that income goes a good distance. But the nuns are not allowed to hold any capital, and for major repairs to the building, or large improvements such as a new boiler to heat the chapel, they survive on gifts or

providence," she says. "It sounds extraordinary, but when we really need something, the Lord does provide." Every six weeks she and the cook go off in a borrowed van to the cash-and-carry in Stroud, to stock up with essential food (they eat meat twice a week, and fish once). But otherwise the nuns rarely venture into the outside world, except to visit

This does not mean they are out of touch with world events. "That dreadful bombing of Iraq!" exclaimed the Mother Abbess with a shudder "Saddam's so awful to his own family and his people. I'm pray-

ing for his conversion." Even a short time spent in her company was extraordinarily cheering. I had expected to find faith and dedication, but not such high spirits, not half such a sense of fun.

NATURE **NOTES**

HOLLY HAS for centuries been credited with the power of warding off evil: the reason, no doubt, for its close association with Christmas. A versatile evergreen, it sheds surplus foliage in summer, and during the winter its berries provide valuable food for birds - which is why, by this time of year, most of them have usually disappeared Browsing animals relish its darkgreen, shiny leaves, their needle-like points notwithstanding.

Every winter in the New Forest hollies are pollarded - cut off short, so that they will shoot again to provide fodder for the semi-wild ponies. So well trained are the horses that they gather from far and wide the moment they hear power-saws start up.

In the old days a decoction of holly leaves was used as a cure for chilblains, and birdlime was made from the bark: boiled down, it would end up as a thick, gluey paste, which could be spread on branches so that birds' feet stuck in it when they landed. Today the hard, white wood is much sought after by turners: when polished up, it takes on the texture almost of ivory. Young, straight stems make excellent walkingsticks. Like yews. hollies can live for several hundred years.

DUFF HART-DAVIS

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SCOTLAND

Aberdeen - 3 January: Aberdeen City 11am, Hazlehead Park CP 6mls

Ayrshire (South) - 27 December: Troon 10am, Railway Station (west side), 8mls (01292 314573). Troon 9.30am, North shore CP adjacent to swimming baths, 9mls (01563 850406). Maidens 10am, CP. Maidens Beach, 6mls (01505 502977) East Lothian - 27 December:

Dalkeith 9.30am, Indoor bowling club CP, 7mls (0131 6639335). Musselburgh 1pm, Mall Avenue CP 5mls (0131 6653549) Edinburgh - 27 December: Edinburgh 9.30am, Hillend lower CP 9mls (0131 334 5868) Fife - 27 December: St Andrews 1.30pm, Petherum CP, 4mls (01334 657573). Leslie 10am, Holi Reservoir off A911 between Leslie and Auchmuirbridge, 8mls (01592 873297). Thornton 10am. Lomond Centre CP, 4mls (01592

Glasgow - 27 December: Glasyow 10am, Bunhouse Rd, nr helvin Hall, 9mls (0141 4290893) Moray – 26 December: Elgin 10am, Elgin Cathedral, 5mls (01542 886134)

Perth & Kincross - 1 Jan: Dunkeld 11am, North CP, 6mls (01350 727708). 2 January: Alyth 10am, Square, 6mls

Stirling - 28 December: Blairlogie 10am, Linden Avenue CP, 5mls (01259 742306) Tayside - 27 December: Kin-

ross 10.30am, Sunnyside CP, 3mls (01383 722843). Kirriemuir 11am, Den CP, 5mls (01382

West Lothian 29 December: Livingston 10am, North Railgay Station, 7mls (01506 👯 (493). 3 Jan: Linlithgow -9.30am, Station, 9mls (01698 881761). 4 Jan: Castlegate 11am, Mercat Cross, 5mls.

Carmarthenshire - 26 December: Llandovery 11am, CP. 4mls (01550 721699), 27 December: Newcastle Emlyn 11am, market CP (football field end), 5mls (01239 711057). Lampeter 1pm, picnic tables, Talfoil. Cwmann, 4mls (01570 422181). n December: Llandeilo 10.30am, CP, 4mls (01558 likley 10.30am, Station, 6mls 822960). 1 January: Llanelli 11am, Bridgend Inn PH CP, 11am, Dick Hudson's PH, Llangennech, 8mls (01554) 759280). Llandybie 10.15am, Red Lion CP, 4.5mls (01550)

Ceredigion - 26 December: Aberystwyth 2pm, Bryn Rd, nr Welsh Books Council, 4mls (01970 612012), 1 January: Silian 1pm, Rookry CP, 5mls **-26** 422369)

Conwy - 20 December: Betws y Coed 10am, Railway Station CP, 8mls (01248 430654). 27 December: Betws y Coed 10.30am, Railway station, 5mls (01745 824611)

Glamorgan – 26 December: Barry 10.30am, Porthkerry Church, 5mls (01446 734686). 27 December: Penarth 11am, Clifftop CP, 5mls (01222 705530) Gwent - 26 December: Pontypool 9.30am, Old Station CP on A4043, Pontnewynydd, 8mls (01495 772109). 29 December: A gavenny 10am. Foxhunter on Blorenge off B4246, N of Blaenavon, 10mls (01495 773495) Gwynedd - 27 December: Dolgellau 11am, Ganllwyd NT CP 5mls (01766 762618). Beaumaris 11am, Glan Yr Afon, nr Llangoed, 7mls (01248 810208). Chwilog 11am, Lon Goed, 5 &

8mls (01766 522238) Merthyr Tydfil ~ 29 December: Merthyr Tydfil10.30am. Garwnant Forest centre (topend Llwyn-On Reservoir), 6mls (01443 223470). 1 January: Pontsticill 11am, Red Cow PH, 6mls (01443 834175)

Monmouthshire - 26 December: Chepstow 9.45am, leisure tre (share cars to Tintern). 5.5 mls (01594 530928). 29 December: Chepstow 9.30am, leisure centre (share cars to Lydbrook), 8mls (01594 530928). 1 Jan: Chepstow 9.45am, leisure centre (share cars to Red-

brook), 8mls (01594 530928) Powys - 27 December: Aberedw 10am, Seven Stars PH, 6mis (01597 824866). 1 Jan: Welshpool 10am, Church St CP, 6mls (01938 552622)

Swansea - 26 December: Pontarddulais 10.30am, Lay-by on hill nr Fountain Inn PH, 6mls (01792 883426). 1 Jan: Gower 10am, A4118: Rose Cottage, Penmaen, 7mls (01792 367188) Wrexham – 28 December: Minera 10.30am, Lead mines CP 7mls (01978 755406)

NORTH EAST Cleveland – 27 December: Seigurn 1.30pm, Station, 6mls Durham (see also NorthumDurham city 1.30pm, Lord Londonderry's statue in market, 5mls (0191 3866886). Barnard Castle 10am, Primrose Bus Point, Prudloe Place, Newcastle. 8 & 10 & 12mls (0191

Brantingham 10.30am. Pond, 8mls (01904 612401). Beverley 11am, Morrison's Supermarket CP 5mls (01904 612401), 29 December: Welton 10.30am, Pond, 6ml (01904 612401). 1 January: Burstwick 10am, Pinfold Lane, 8mls (01904 612401). Northumberland (see also Durham) - 27 December: Morpeth 9.30am, CP next to Morpeth library, 7mls (01670 518031). 29 December: Blanchland 10.30am, main CP, 9mls (0191 4887693). 30 December: Haltwhistle 10.30am, Walter Wilson CP. 7mls (0191 4773478). Rothbury 9.30am, Prudice St. Newcastle - coach must be booked, 8-14mls (0191 5490832) Tyne & Wear - 1 January:

Whickham 1pm, Junction

Broadway/Fellside Rd, 5mls

(0191 4887693)

Yorkshire (North) - 27 December: Reeth 10.30am, Village green, 8mls (01748 822845). 30 December: Grassington 10.30am, National Park CP, 7mls (01282 816795). Fountains Abbey 10am, Visitor centre. 10mls (01904 612401), 1 January: Pateley Bridge 10.15am, CP, Brimham Rocks, 9mls. (01943 873197). Helmsley 10am, Tom Smith's Cross, on A170 6kms W of Helmsley, 12mls

(01904 612401) Yorkshire (South) - 26 December: Mexborough 10.30am, Harlington Rd Day Centre, 4mls (01709 571169). Rossington 10am, St Michael's church, 6mls (01302 742771). 27 December: Doncaster 10am, Hexthorpe Park Gates, 9mls (01302 856976). Barnburgh 10am, Barnburgh church, 8mls (01709) 571169). 1 January: Conisborough 10am, Castle Inn, 4mls (01709 571169)

Yorkshire (West) - 27 December: Wakefield 2pm, Denby Dale Rd, Holmeield CP 3.5mls (01924 784752), Hebden Brigde 10.30am, Canal Marina, 12mls (01422 885329). 29 December: (01943 863786). 1 Jan: Eldwick 7.5mls (0113 2639951). Wakefield 11am, Newmillerdam CP 5mls (01924 820732). 2 Jan: Addingham 1.30pm, Memorial Hall. 6mls (0113 2403889)

Cheshire (see also Stafford-

shire & Derbyshire) - 26 December: Macclesfield 10am. Trentabank Reservoir CP by Rangers hut, 6mls (01625 572445). 27 December: Dunham Town 10.30am, Massey Hall, NT CP, 8mls (0161 7667775). Congleton 1.30pm, Library CP, 5mls (01606 832236). 29 December: Congleton 11am. Library CP (car share to Lach Dennis/Northwich), 5mls (01477 537905). 30 December: Congleton 10.30am, Library CP (car share to Godstrey), 8mls (01477 534238). Culcheth 10.30am, Pack Horse Inn. Church Lane, 10mls (01925 762472). Culcheth 10.30am, Pack Horse Inn, Church Lane, 5mls (01925 763512). 31 December: Congleton 11am, Library CP (car share to Haslington/Crewe), 5mls (01606 832197). Shotwick 9.30am. church, 7mls (01244 810166). 1 Jan: Congleton 10am, Library CP (car share to Macclesfield),

8mls (01606 832236) Cumbria - 26 December: Gilsland 9.30am, Sands CP, Carlisle or 10.30am, Gilsland Station CP, 7mls (01228 74746). Distington 2pm, Myers & Bowmans old garage, 6mis (01946 831624). 27 December: Walney Island 10am, Earnse Bay CP, 5mls (01229 824190). Ambleside 9.30am, Sands CP, Carlisle or 11am, main CP, Ambleside, 6mls (01228 74746). 29 December: Thursby 9.30am, Sands CP, Carlisle or 9.45am, Thursby, grid ref NY327502, 5mls (01228 74746). 1 Jan: Crosby Ravenscroft 9.30am, Sands CP, Carlisle or 10.30am, Centre, 9mls (01228 74746). Distington 2pm, Myers & Bowmans old garage, 6mls (01946 831624).

Lancashire - 26 December: Skelmersdale 10am, Beacon Park Centre, 5mls (01772 812034). Penwortham Ipm, CP next to Fleece Inn, 6mls Chipping 10.15am, main CR 6mls (01254 822851). 27 December: Rawtenstall 10am, Kay St CP, near centre, 9mls (01706 217577 or 228681). Nelson 10.30am, Victoria park CP, Carr Rd, 6mls (01282 613721. 28 December: Edgeworth 9.30am, Barlow In-

berland) - 30 December: Jan: Ormskirk 1pm, Vicarage Lane, Ruff Wood, 5mls (01695 576199). Rivington 11am, hall barn, 9mls (01772 736467)

Manchester - 30 December: Littleborough 11am, Hollingworth Lake visitor centre, 5mls (0161 6438346). 28 December: Humberside - 26 December: Romiley 10am, Railway station, 10mls (0161 4949918) Merseyside - 28 December: Thurstaston 10.30am, Wirral Country Park, Station Rd, 6mls

(0151 6089472). 30 December:

Spital 10.30am, Railway station,

CENTRAL SOUTHERN Hampshire - 27 December Shawford 11am, Shawford Down CP, 6.5mls (01703 769640). Alton 9.30am & 1.30pm, Manor CP (behind Duxour Store), 10 & 5mls (01420 564124), 28 December: Wickham 10am, Wickham Square, 5mls (01329) 284556). Breamore 10am. Breamore House CP, 5mls (01722 330214). 29 December: Fritham 10am, CP, on edge of woods, nr Royal Oak pub, 7mls (01703 769640). 30 December: Ashurst 10.40am, Railway Station CP 5mls (01703 769640). 31 December: Ringwood 10am. Moyles Court, 5.5mls (01202 519791). 1 Jan: Bassett 10.30am, Sports Centre, by Bowling Green, 5.5mls (01703 769640) Isle of Wight - 28 December: Arreton 10am, Arreton Schoolsl, 3 & 5mls (01983)

Oxfordshire - 26 December: Banbury 10am, Red Lion (site of), Upper Wardington, 5.5mls (01295 266979). Nettlebed 10am. Crocker End Green, 9mls (01491 574065). 27 December: Henley 10.30am, Greys Rd CP, 4mis (01491 411011). 28 December: Abingdon 10am, Rye Farm CP. 8mls (01235 202784). 30 December: Stratton Audley 10.30am, The Church, 7mls (01869 244436). Childrey 10am, Church, 7.5mls (01235 751280). 1 Jan: Woodstock 10.30am, Hensington Rd, 5.5mls (01608 642360). Nuffield 10am. Homer Farm. 5mls (01491 574065)

Wiltshire 26 December: Bradford on Avon 10am, Railway Station CP, 5mls (01225 867620). Bratton 10.30am, CP at top of Westbury White Horse Hill, 7mls (01380 725457). 27 December: Corsham 10.30am, Newlands Rd CP, 4mls (01249 650725). 28 December: Wroughton 10am, Barbury Castie Country Park CP. 6mis (01793 740450). 31 December: Avebury 10pm, A4, Overton Hill, 6mls (01793 616346). 1 Jan: Salisbury 9.30am, Salt Lane CP, 11mls (01722 324949). Urchfont 10.30am, Top of Redborn Hill, 7mls (01380 725457). Avebury 10am, A4, Overton Hill, 6mls (01793 616346), Box 9.30, Selwyn hall CP, 9.5mls (01380

Derbyshire - 27 December:

MIDLANDS

Brackenfield 10am, High Ordish CP, 11mls (01629 583883). Belper 10am, Field Lane CP 10mls (01332 662534), 28 Dec: Sandiacre 11am, Library, 6mls (0115 9392554). Taddington 9.30am, Congleton Library CP 9.5mls (01260 274248). 29 Dec: Matlock 10.30am, Railway Station, 6mls (01629 583883). Hartshorne, nr Swadlincote 10.30am, CP opp. Bull's Head (Dethick Hall), 7.5mls (01332 551552). 1 Jan: Whaley Bridge 10.30am, Whaley Bridge canal basin, 8mls (01663 732706) Hereford & Worcester - 27 December: Willersey, nr Broadway 10am, CP at rear of village hall, 5mls (01386 49938). Redditch 9.30am, King's Norton Park CP, West Hill Rd, King's Norton, 8mls (0121 445 1884). Clent 10am, Lay-by NE side of A491, 1/4 mile N of Four Winds restaurant, 7mls (01527 873441). Dinedor 9.30am, Village Hall, 9mls. 28 December: Malvern 8.30am, Co-op CP, High St, Bilston (car share to Malvern). 10mls (01902 671449), 29 Dec: Bewdley 10am, Blackstone picnic area, 6mls (01299 405166). Malvern Link 10.30am, Link Top CP, 2.5 & 4.5mls (01684 560989), Colwall 10.15am, Station yard, 5 & 8mls (01684 560989). 30

(0121 4765420). Leicestershire - 26 December: Woodhouse Eaves 10.30am, Main St CP, 6mls (01509 413801). Anstey 2pm, Top Green, 4mls (0116 2682415). 27 December: Knossington 10.15am, Village Centre, 8mls (01572 755742). Cold Newton 10am, Burleys Way (The stitute, 9mls (01257 263841). 1 Pineapple), Leicester, 9mls

Dec: Broadway 10am, Leamington Rd CP, 5mls. (01386

841791). Lickey Hills 10am, vis-

itor centre, 6mls (01926 776363).

Hagley 10am, station, 6mls

(01384 395692). 1 Jan: Dodford

10am, Dodford Inn CP 6mls

Burleys Way (The cember: Bourne End 10.30am, CP, Moorholme Lane, Well End, 7mls (0116 2418887). 5mls (01628 483430). Bourne Coalville 10am, rear End 1.30pm. CP, Moorholme CP. NW Leicestershire Lane, Well End, 5mls (01494) Council Offices, 6mls 881543. 29 December: Brill (0116 2365789). Hinckley 8am, Windmill, 15mls 10.30am, Brunel Rd, 8mls (01869 601452), 30 Dec: (01455 220418). Dorney 11am, Main Northamptonshire - 26 gates to Dorney Court, December: Isham 5mls (01753 642740). 10am, Post Office, Hadenham 10.30am. South St, 4.5mls Village Hall CP (cor-(01536 726588), ner of Bank's Rd Isham Ipm, and Churchway), The Lilacs PH. เ01296 4mls (01536 427717), 1 Jan: 511162). Earls Stokenchurch Barton 11am, Kings 10.30am, Arms. 8.5mls Earls Barton (01494)Square, 6mls (01604 Princes Ris-810259), Scaldwell 9am. church, 6.5mls Mount CP (cor-(01604 492265). ner of Church St 27 Dec: East & Stratton Rd1, Carlton 9.30am 12 & 6mls, Essex - 26 December: Rochford 10mls, 10am 4mls, 1.30pm 10am, Rail Station. 4.5mls, Coun-(01702 582230). Billertry Park (01933 460373). 28 Dec: Earls Barton 9.30am. Square, 6mls (01604 811199). 1 Jan: Grendon 10.30am, nr Village hall, 5.5mls (01933 Nottinghamshire - 26 De-

Rd, 5mls (0118 9882674).

cember: Misterton 10am, Packet Inn, 7mls (01427 838789). Retford 11am, CP off Chaplegate, 5mls (01777 838763). 27 December: Stapleford 9.30am, London Rd CP, Newark & 9.45, North CP, Stapleford Woods, 3.5mls (01636 700824). Strelley 10.15am, Church, 9mls (0115 9821022). Eakring 10.30am, Entrance of Redgate Wood, Whitestub Lane, 8mls (0115 9204066). 30 December: Kingston on Soar 10.15am, Village Green, 7mls (0115 9254066), 1 January: Lowdham 10.30am, North end of Main St, 8mls (0115 9623560). Strelley 10.30am, Broad Oak PH CP 6mls (0115 9254066). New Clipstone 10.30am, Clipstone Drive, 8mls (0115 9892075). Shropshire - 27 De-

cember: Craven Arms 10.30am, Corvedale Rd, 8mls (01694 781465). 28 Dec: Wellington 10am, Forest glen CP, Cluddley lane, 9mls (01952 299297). 29 Dec: Broseley 9.30am, Health centre CP, 11mls (01952 882228). 30 December: Church Stretton 10am, Carding Mill Valley (before cafe CP), 8mls (01743 244922). 1 Jan: Oswestry 10am. Central CP, 9.5mls (01691 623026).

Staffordshire - 26 December: Biddulph 10am, Congleton Library CP, 8mls (01782 512545). 27 December: Aldridge 9am, South Parade CP, Sutton Coldfield, 8mls (0121 3293733). Sandon 9.30am, Slip Rd opp. Dog & Doublet PH at junc. of Sandon Lane & A51, 5mls (01785 662237). 28 December: Meerbrook 10am & 1.30pm, Tittesworth Reservoir Amenity Area CP, 5mls & 5mls (01782 512851). 29 December: Stone 9.45am, Westbridge Park CP, 6.5mls (01785 815141)

Warwickshire – 26 December: Cherington 9.30am, In lane opposite Weston Mill, 9mls (01608 662279). 27 Dec: Henley in Arden 10am, Prince Harry's Rd CP 7mls (0121 779 4456). 30 Dec: Ilmington 10am, Layby on Ilmington-Darlingscote Rd, 9mls (01789 295426). Edgehill 10am, Ratley Rd, 6mls (01608 642360). 1 Jan: Kenilworth 10am, Castle CP, 5mls (01203 621649). Stratford on Avon 10.30am, Top of Maidenhead Rd, 7mls (01789

EAST ANGLIA Cambridgeshire - 26 December: Huntingdon 10am, Riverside CP, 6mls (01480 458249). 27 December: Swaffham Prior 10.30am, Village Hall, 5mls (01638 665949), Helpston 2pm. Church, 3mls (01733 222880), 28 December: Ely 10am, Cathedral CP Barton Rd, 6mis (01223 833417). Marholm 2pm, Village Hall, 4mls (01733 577482). 31 December: Peterborough 1.30pm. Ferry Meadows, Visitors Centre, 5mls (01733 810303). 1 January: Snailwell 10,30am, park nr church, 5mls (01638 665949). Peterborough 10am, Key Theatre CP, 8mls (01733

Lincolnshire - 26 December: Horncastle 10am, Market Place, 5mls (01507 527358). Lincoln 10.30am, The Lions in the Arboretum, Monks Road, 4mls (01522 522934). 28 December: Horncastie 10.30am, Swimming Pool, 8.5mls (01522 792172). 1 January: Lincoln 10.30am, bourne 2pm, Public CP, Station

Grandstand, West Common, tion, 5.5mls (01702 582230). Carholme Rd, 8mls (01522 Loughton 10.30am, Central line 522534). Broughton 10.30am, station, 8mls (0181 530 7303), 27 CP on Ermine St, 10mls. Spald-December: Hadleigh 10am, ing 11am, Ayscoughfee Gar-John Burrows recreation dens, 5mls (01406 362885). ground CP, Rectory Rd, 6mls (01702 540662), Maldon 10.30am. Norfolk - 26 December: Brancaster 11am, Beach CP 6mls Butt Lane CP 5mls (01245 (01945 587443). 27 Dec: King's 609064). Loughton 10.30am. Central line station, 6mls (0181

Lynn 10.30am, CP, Park Farm, Snettisham, 4mls (01553 671829) Suffolk - 26 December: Horringer 10.30am, Community centre, 5mls (01359 250 815). 27 Dec: Stowmarket 10.30am, ICI works CP, Needham Rd, 5mls (01449 721121). Sudbury 10.30am, The Croft, N of St Gregorys Church, 5mls (01787 371880). 1 January: Culford 10.30am, Culford School Sports Centre CP, 8mls (01359 250815).

SOUTH EAST

Bedfordshire - 26 December: Old Warden 10.30am, Church, 7mls (01234 353704). 27 December: Ampthill 10.30am, Park CP, 7mls (01234 353704). Barton-le-Clay 10am. Old Rd, 7mls (01582 883252). 28 December: Stotfold 10.30am, The Green, 7mls (01234 353704). 29 December: Potton 10.30am. Bull St CP 6mls (01234 381508). Luton 1pm, Copt Hall (off Wheathampstead, Lower Harpenden Rd), 3mls (01582 661944 evenings). 30 December: Hinxworth 10,30am, Centre, 9mls (01234 353704). Bromham 10.30am, Mill, 5mls (01234 301027). Leighton Buzzard 9.30am, Woburn village CP (opp. church), 5mls (01525 377599). 31 December: Sundon Hills 10.30am, CP, 7mls (01462 700501). 1 January: Oakley 10am, Bedford Arms, 6mls (01234 823075). Shillington 10.30am, Musgrave Arms, 7mls (01234 353704). Dunstable 10.30am, Downs visitor centre, 6mls (01582 668824). Berkshire – 26 December: Chapel Row 11am, Bucklebury Common CP, 5mls (0118

9617972). 27 December: Maidenhead 10.15am, NT CP. Pinkneys Drive, 4mls (01628 622991). 29 December Hungerford 10.05am, Station CP, 11mls (01635 32842). 30 December: Cookham Dean 10.15am, Winter Hill NT CP, 3-5mls (01628 622991), 1 January: Hurley 10.30am, CP nr church. 5mls (0118 9403158), Pang-

523513). Danbury 10.30am, NT SOUTH WEST Buckinghamshire - 27 De-CP, Danbury Common, 6mls (01245 609064). 30 December: Broomfield 10.30am, Community Centre CP, 7.5mls (01245 609064), 31 December: Writtle 10.30am, Hylands Park, 9mls (01245 609064). 1 January: Terling 10.30cm, The Raleigh Arms PH, 6mls (01245 609064). Waltham Abbey 10.30am, Lee Valley Park, Highbridge CP off A101, 4mls (01277 214684). Sible Hedingham 11am, Christmas field, nr school, 7mls (01376 331909). Chineford 11am. BR. Station, 6mls (0181 527 3938) Hertfordshire - 26 December: Hertford/Hoddeson 10.30am. Bayford Station CP, 8mls (0181 360 0268). 30 December: Hinxworth 10am, High St. 9mls (01234 353704). 31 December: Reed 9.30am. Heath Sports Centre CP, Baldock Rd, Royston, 5mis (01763 242677). 1 Jan: South Mimms 10.30am, Blackhorse Lane, 7mls (0181 4492139) Kent - 26 December: Teston 10.30am, Picnic site, 5.5mls (01732 851310). 27 December: Sandgate 10am, CP nr castle. 7mls (01843 596249). Tonbridge 10.30am, Watergate big bridge over the Medway, by castle, 5.5mls (01732 851310). 28 December: Yalding 10.30am, Station, 5mls (01732 851310). Charing 10.30am, Church (Market Place), 6mls (01622 891277). 29 December: Selling 10am, Perry Wood CP 6mls. 30 December: Lamberhurst 10.30am, CP in village centre, 5mls (01892 525948). West Malling 10.30am, CP behind Tesco, 4mls (01732 851310). Tenbridge 10.30am, Dene Park CP, 4 miles N of Tonbridge, 7.5mls (01634 711734). Westerham 10am, Green, 8mls (0181

> (01634 364855) London – 26 December: East Finchley 10.30am. Underground station, 7.5mls (0181 883 8190). Keston 10am, 5mls (0181 857 0300). 28 December: Hayes

4622215). I Jan: Sandling, nr

Maidstone 11am, Old A229

carriageway),

Rd, near Tyland Barn (off

Bluebell Hill, southbound

rear of Woolworths, 10am, Station, 9mls (0181 462 1168). Woodford Green 10.30am, Hawkey Hall, Broadmead Rd. 6mls (0181 504 5267), 29 December: Hainault 10am, CP by lake, Hainault Forest, 5mls (0181 530 3020), 1 January: Keston 1pm, Ponds CP, Westerham Rd. 5mls (0181 467 4698). Surrey - 26 December: Shalford 10.15am & 1.45pm, The Parrot PH, park in side road leading to Industrial Estate.

5mls & 5mls (01252 657741). Reigate 10am, CP, top of Reigate Hill off A217, 6mls (01737 833155), Elstead 10am, The Moat CP, 5mls (01428 682842). Headley 10am, Heath main CP (opp. cricket ground), 5mls (0181 3372485). 27 December: Wootton 10am, Friday St CP, 8mls (01932 341463). Egham 10am, Bishopgate Entrance to Windsor Great Park, 7mls (01344 776621), Chobham 10.30am, Village CP, 7mls (01483 768548). 28 December: Oxshott 10.30am, Station, 7mls.

Avon - see Gloucestershire and Somerset

Cornwall ~ 27 December: Holywell Bay 10.30am, NT CP. Brnls (01637 875199), Godophin 10am, garage, park in village or Gwedna Woods, 7mls, 28 December: Polzeath 1.30pm, CP. 4mls (01208 73489). Constantine 1.30pm, Village CP, 4.5mls. 1 January: Gorran Churchtown 10.30am, 6mls (01726 842101). Gweek 10.30am, Bridge at Gweek, Nr Helston, 10mls (01326 340728)

leigh 11am, Devonshire Centre, Mill CP 6mls (01392 413073). Barnstaple 10.30am, Arlington Court NT CP 5mls (01271 376274). Totnes, 10am. Borough CP 10.30am, Woolston Green, 5.5mls (01803 862829). 27 December: Bovey Tracey 10am. Lower CP, 8mls (01392 413073). December: Bampton 10.15am, CP (next to Swan hotel), 4.5mls (01398 323456). Dartington 10,30am, Meadowbrook CP. 5.5mls (01803 863355). 1 Jan: Chawleigh 11am, Eggesford Forest. 7mls (01271 342703). Morchard Bishop

Devon - 26 December: Bick-

(01392 413073) Dorset - 27 December: Dorchester 1pm. Stinsford, at top of lane, 4.5mls (01305 784672). 28 December: Milton Abbas 11am & 2pm, Milton Abbey school CP, 4mls & 3mls (01258 820209).1 January: Sandbanks 10.30am, South Haven Point, Shell Bay, 8mls (01202 470543).

10.30am, CP nr school 8mls

Gloucestershire - 27 December: Willersey, nr Broadway 10am, CP at rear of village hall, 5mls (01386 49938), Gloucester 10am, Trading Standards Office, Denmark Rd, 6mls (01452 855909). 28 December: cheltenham 9.30am, layby at foot of Cleeve Hill, nr Southam, 6mls (01242 522840), 29 December: Amberley 10am, Reservoir, 5mls (01453 832077). Stone 11am, church, 6mls (0117 9315033). 1 January: Winchcombe 10am, Abbey Terrace, 5mls (01242 604268). Cirencester 10am, Waterioo CP (share cars to Minchinhampton, 4.5mls (01285 650012)

Somerset - 26 December: Kingston St Mary 10.30am & 2pm. Travellers Rest PH. 8mls & 4mls (01323 257030), Clevedon 10am, Salthouse Fields CP. 5mls (01275 872894), 27 De cember: Yeovil 10am, Old station CP, 5mls (01935 424424). North Currey 1.30pm, The Square, 5.5mls (01823 324185). 28 December: Dulverton 10.15am, CP, 4.5mls (01398 323456). 29 December: Alsholt 10.30am, Lydeard Hill CP, 4.5mls (01823 442509). Burrington Ham 10.30am, CP, 6.5mls (01934 513714). Wells 1.45pm, Bishops Barn, 4.5mls (01749 678710), 30 December: Norton Fitzwarren 10am, Hillfort CP 6.5mls (01823 324185). 31 December: Wells 10.30am, Ash Lane, 8mls (01749 670019). Minehead 2pm, Webbers Post, 4mls (01643 703986). Minehead 10am. Webbers Post, 6mls (01643 703986), 1 January: Clevedon 10am, Salthouse Fields CP 5mls (01275 871236). Midsomer Norton 10.30am, Safeway CP, 4mls (01761 436398)

****THE INDEPENDENT**

Cherry Berry

7mls (01277 654626).

South Woodham Fer-

rers 10.30am. The Bell

PH, 10mls (01245 609064).

Rochford 10am, Rail Sta-

989 5116). Wrabness 10.30am,

RSPB CP, Stourwood, 5mls

(01255 432027). Wrabness

1.30pm, RSPB CP, Stourwood,

5mls (01206 854298), 28 De-

cember: Boreham 10.30am,

Sainsbury's CP, 7mls (01245

609064). 29 December: East

Hanningford 10.30am, Rear CP,

Windmill PH, The Tye, 4mls

(01245 223657). Kelvedon Hatch

10am, The Green Man PH,

Navestock Side, 5mls (01708)

just £9.95 for 3 inc p&p

The Cherry Ветту ог Gaultheria ground cover shrub with glossy pointe green leaves referred to as The leaves, when crushed in winter, have haped flowers

These are followed in autumn and winter by aromatic scarlet fruit of about 1/2" diameter which persist until early spring.

cherry and is liked by birds. The shrub only grows 6" tall but can spread up to 3' making it an excellent, attractive ground cover.

You can buy 3 of these lovely shrubs for just £9.95 or buy 6 for just £16.90 - saving you £3.

Both prices include postage and packing

THE INDEPENDENT CHERKY BERRY PER, PO Box 64. South West District Office, Manchester M16 9HY.

Please quote ref: ING956 when ordering

ŀ	3 Cherry Berry @ £9.95						
	6 Cherry Berry № £16.90						
	Lenclove a crossed cheque for f						
	Expiry Date/						
	Signature						
į	NAME						
į	ADDRESS						

To: THE INDEPENDENT CHERRY BERRY OFFER. PO Box 64, South West District Office, Mancheser M16 9HY

SHOPPING

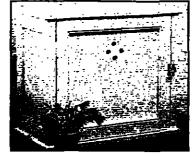
1999: a space odyssey

Boxing Day is designed for lounging at home – but first there are some serious purchases to be considered.

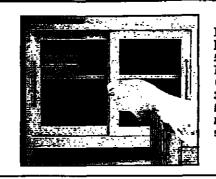
If you want to know just where to put all those presents, **Rhiannon Batten** has the answers.

TOILETRIES:

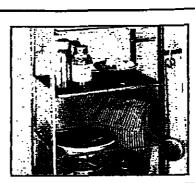
With the fine packaging – and poseur attributes – of a good toiletry gift set, it's tempting to leave your Christmas bubble bath out on display. If you don't want to come home one day to find that greedy fingers have been helping themselves to your sensuous massage oil, though, keep them safely out of harm's way in a neat and sleek bathroom cabinet.



Bathroom cupboard with one shelf, £125, House (01258 454884 for mail order)



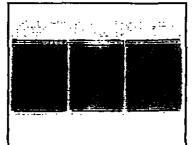
Ekenas low unit, £299, Habitat (0645 334433 for nearest store)



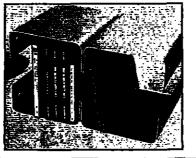
Bathroom trolley, \$109.95, The Holding Company (0171-610 9160)

CDs:

For anyone with a bulging CD collection, Boxing Day is D-Day - or should that be CD-Day?. Blitz your Boyzone and have a Massive Attack on the organisation front with some serious CD storage equipment. Whether it's a walk-in musical wardrobe you require or the proportional equivalent of an elfin shoe box, make sure you give yourself room to expand.



drawer CD case, £18, Muji (0171-323 2208 for nearest store)



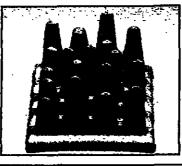
CD box, £7.50, Habitat (0645 334433 for nearest store)



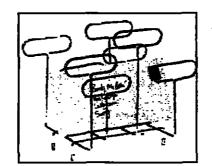
Travel CD bag, £12.50, The Holding Company (0171-610 9160)

CARDS AND LETTERS:

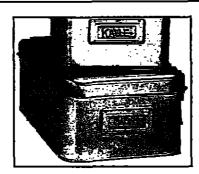
If you admit to finding unscrupulous magpies infuriatingly difficult to live with (recycling's great but does anyone really remember to use their Christmas cards to cut down into eco-friendlier gift tags next year?), brute force is the only way out. Have done with chaos - it's never organised - and take charge with some stylish but pleasingly functional filing equipment.



Garside Digital Grass Jetter holder, £12.99, Same (0171-247 9992)



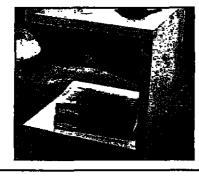
Forest letter rack, £8.95, Ocean Warehouse Shop (0171-670 1222)



Set of two Emu boxes, £9.50, IKEA (0181-208 5607 for nearest store)

Books:

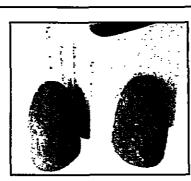
Books should not be hidden away under tables, inside desks and next to beds. Colour-coded, subject-themed, or nonchalantly shoved together, truth is they make the perfect display objects - eyecatching, impressive (if you read the right books, of course) and easily changed to suit the mood - so be brazen and create a library in the literary wilderness of your front room.



occasional beech table, £89, Habitat (0645 334433 for nearest store)



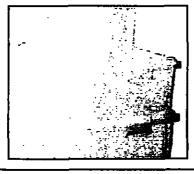
Lack shelf unit, £89, IKEA (enquiries and nearest store, 0181-208 5607)



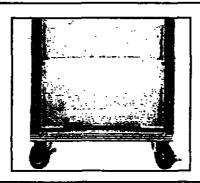
Granite bookends, £14.95 per pair, Ocean (0870 8484840 for mail order)

Toys:

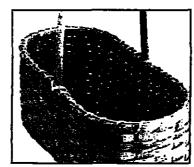
The thing about toys - whether they are of the adult or the juvenile sort - is that they were designed to be played with so keeping them in enforced order is always going to be an uphill struggle. But, even if the scattered-around-the-carpet habitat is their home of choice, at least try to tempt your toys into confinement with some stylish storage options.



PP Clip handle boxes, from £6.95. Muji (0171-323 2208 for nearest store)



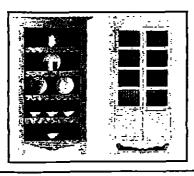
Plywood storage Unit with PP drawers, £135, Muji (0171-323 2208 for nearest store)



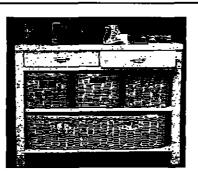
Stair basket, £45.95, Shaker (0171-724 7672 for mail order and enquiries)

KITCHENWARE:

The very culinary tools that are given to make your life easier - blenders, matching 60-piece dinner sets, steamer pans and so on - usually just end up by leaving you with a Krypton Factor-style obstacle course every time you step into the kitchen. To make your meetings with the midnight toast fiend easier and your path to souffle success a little less messy, clear the decks with some clever kitchen cupboardry.



Maximus tall cabinets, from £895. Colour Blue (0171-820 7700)



Oliva beech kitchen units, from £599, Habitat (8645 334433 for nearest store)



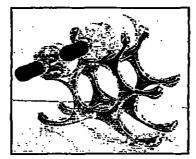
Butcher's block trolley, £179.95, The Holding Company (0171-610 9160)

WINE BOTTLES:

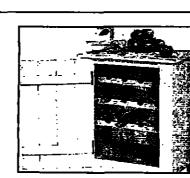
If you fancy yourself as something of a wine buff - and you have a portly-enough post-Christmas wine cellar to merit such a label forget sniffing, sipping and spitting your way to the top and start caring for your bottles with the appropriate stacking. And for those who have no such lofty aspirations, at least treat your supermarket plonk to a change of image by leaving it on a stylish shelf.



Bottle Tower, £99, Divertimenti (0181-246 4300)



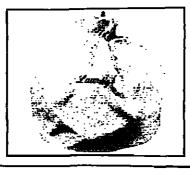
Polished aluminium 6-bottle stand, £33, Millennium (07071 880760)



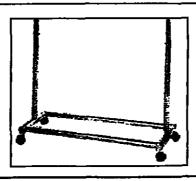
Country cupboard, £149, and wine rack insert, £29.95, Ocean (0870 8484840)

CLOTHES:

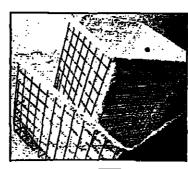
OK, no-one actually likes to see people ironing their knickers or colour-coding their t-shirts but, even for the less-obsessed with neatness, it's time to sharpen up and do away with the heap-on-the-floor school of wardrobing. With the number of funky hangers you can organise your clothes around, there's no excuse for letting them lie around gathering dust - whatever state your wardrobe is in, learn to dress it well,



Giant
padded
Sloppy Joe
laundry
hag,
£29.99, The
White
Company
(0171-385
7988)



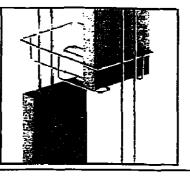
Adjustable steel hanging rail, £32, Muji (0171-323 2208 for nearest store)



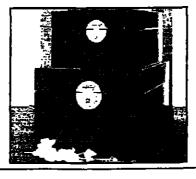
chrome metal wire linen baskets, from £29, Habitat (0645 334433)

VIDEOS:

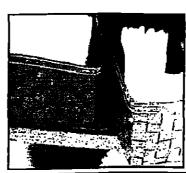
Video nasties are literally just that for anyone struggling with their Feng Shui tendencies - all those garish plastic boxes, stray tapes without their covers and, of course, the humiliation of having labels that tell everyone else exactly what you're watching. Do your aesthetic side a favour and invest in some suitably sophisticated casing for your home entertainment.



Wire video rack, £29.95, Ocean Warehouse Shop (0171-670 1222)



Kelly Hoppen lacquer video box, £30, Debenhams (0171-408 4444)



woven leather baskets, from £25, The Holding Company (0171-610 9160)

Chocolate

brown soft

SIX OF THE BEST

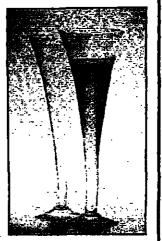
CHAMPAGNE FLUTES



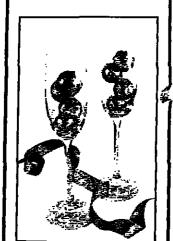
Niro stemmed handblown flute, £6.50, Habitat (call 0645 334433 for details)



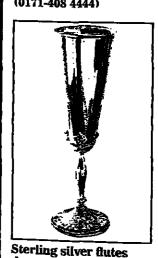
or £140 for two, Royal Brierley Crystal (01384 70161)



Hollow-stemmed champagne flutes, £12.95 for two, Divertimenti (0181-246 4300)



Wine Gourmet flutes with chocolate truffles, £15 for two, Debenhams (0171-408 4444)



decorated with heartshaped leaves, £304 for two. V&A (01672 542288)



Otto flutes, from £10 each, LSA International (for stockists, call 01932 789721)

Motoring

The New Beetle is set to become a design classic, but can its performance live up to its looks? By John Simister

The Bug is back and it bites

ou must have heard of the New Beetle. Derived from a concept car created by designers in Volkswagen's Californian creativity outpost, and bang on target for America's youthful sensibilities, be they actual or wishful, the automotive insect idea has gone down a swarm in the States. And now the Mexicanbuilt New Beetle is coming to Europe. Britain's first batch of 1,000 cars, all left-hand drive and costing about £16,200 with lashings of equipment, arrives in January, right-hand drives following at the end of 1999.

The New Beetle, as it is officially known, is based on underpinnings shared with the VW Golf and Bora, the Audi A3 and TT, the Skoda Octavia and the new Seat Toledo. That means it has a front-mounted, watercooled engine and front-wheel drive, instead of an aircooled, flat-four rattler at the rear. But that doesn't stop the shape from being truly Beetlish, almost a cartoon of the original but with modern detailing.

It's inspired by a past car, one which has been replicated more than any other (22 million and rising as it is still being made at the Mexican factory), but otherwise there's not much that's slavishly retro apart from two looped, plastic grab-handles. Everything else is a cleaned-up, topological distortion of before, including bash-proof plastic mudguards so it no longer matters that you can't see them from the driver's seat.

So why has Volkswagen produced such a folly? The Concept One show car, unveiled in Detroit in 1994 as a bit of fun, surprised Volkswagen with the strength of pent-up demand. So the company looked into making a production version, and here it is. The original Beetle was a functional people's car, but it became a symbol of youth and universality against excess and obsolescence. The new one reinterprets what the original became, rather than what it was conceived to be. Rover's upcoming new Mini has the same job to do.

You might have seen a New Beetle here already, but it will have been a US-specification car, imported privately or by a specialist. Word has spread, however. and imaginations are fired up. My daughter (11) has begged, demanded, and implored me to bring one home on test so that she and her friends can go to school in it. Nothing is currently cooler than a New Beetle.

After all this, it's actually a bit of a surprise to sit in one, ready to drive off into a flower-powered sunset. For that's the point: Volkswagen is pushing a dream made modern reality, sponsoring an Andy Warhol exhibition at its Wolfsburg. Germany home to coincide with the Beetle's launch, and supplying every New Beetle with a facia-mounted flower vase in the manner of a Sixties American Beetle accessory.

There are two engines available, a 115bhp. 2.0-litre



The New Beetle - it combines Sixties flower-power design nostalgia with the practicality and performance of a Nineties Golf

(150bhp, 2.3 litres) will follow. Undoubtedly the engine to have is the TDI diesel, because the petrol engine feels and sounds too, well, "normal". The diesel's clattery sound and low-revving nature better suit the expectations that the Beetle's shape generates, even if

Sportier, more powerful and with better handling than the original, the New Beetle is a dream made modern reality

the sound does emanate from the wrong end. And with a hefty 155lb ft of torque, the Beetle TDI scuttles along with a good deal more verve than the original ever did. It is also a far better bet in the bends, thanks to its modern engine and suspension layout. It feels quite sporty, actually, with the tautest feel and crispest steer-

So it is fun to drive, as well as to look at and be in. Clearly, there is less room inside than in a Golf, but the Beetle is still a proper four-seater and its hatchback - the original certainly didn't have one of those - reveals a meaningful boot space. The rear seat folds, of course, but so did the old one's. The driver is confronted with a typical Beetle instrument cluster, based on a huge, round speedometer, inset this time

with a little fuel gauge and an equally small rev-counter. The seat fabrics echo the body colour to vivid citrus yellow/green in my car), and plastic panels below the window line are designed to look like painted metal. Dimpled textures and mock-aluminium abound, and the only leathergrain-look is to be found on the gear lever's gaiter. That's an error: the gaiter should be in black rubber, and the lever should be long and spindly.

It has the correct springy, clonky action, though.
Well, are you convinced? It's the Disneyland effect: you feel cynical before the experience, but end up captivated. It worked for me, anyway. Obviously there is no sensible reason to buy a Beetle instead of a Golf, but neither has Mickey Mouse ever claimed to be a

SPECIFICATIONS

Volkswagen Beetle TDI Price: £16,200 Engine: 1.896cc, four cylinders, eight valves, direct-injection turbodiesel, 90bhp at 3,750rpm

Transmission: five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive Performance: 106mph, 0-60 in 12.8sec. 49-54mpg

The New Beetle has no direct rivals. If you want one, nothing else is likely to do. The role of the old Beetle has been taken over by successive generations of the Golf, and the new one is designed for a different and less serious job. Rover's new Mini, due in 2000. is inspired by the 1959 original and comes the closest to the New Beetle idea.

... but the prototype is still crawling along

If you fancy Beetle style, but not the new price tag, hunt down an original. Just be wary of the year, warns James Ruppert

BEETLEMANIA. THERE is no other matter what you call it: just say the explanation for it. The queues for the all-new Volkswagen Beetle are stretching into the next millennium, both in the UK and worldwide. When it finally arrives in Britain in the new year, it will be expensive and left-hand drive. No wonder potential buyers after some style and fun are starting to take a closer look at the original model.

No other car this century has cultivated such devotion, passion and sales, the latter in excess of 22 million. Surely 22 million buyers can't The wrong? An objective opinion would be that it was slow, cramped, noisy, and had potentially lethal handling. Then again, it was relatively cheap, had simple mechanics and was well built, easy to drive with light controls and an unburstable, air-cooled engine

Never mind all that: no other car more than 50 years. A survivor, style word Beetle and everyone knows

what car you are referring to. If you've decided that a Beetle is for you, and I would drive one first before making a final decision, be aware that there are millions to choose from, and it pays to be choosy. There are probably more bodged and broken Beetles on sale than any other classic, and the secret is finding a sound, rust-free original, or one properly restored.

Prices have remained stable, which mean high. Good examples are rarely less than £2,000, but expect to pay around £3,000 for a very tidy and usable 1300. Most in demand though, are the Cabriolets which command prices in the region of £7-£9,000, providing they are factory originals and not an owner DIY hacksaw job.

First choose your model; as a looked so distinctive and lovable, or rule, the later the better. I'll spare remained in constant production for you the very long history lesson except to say that by 1980, when proicon and design classic, it doesn't duction had moved to Mexico,



parts had been changed except for anything up to 1966, had barelythe metal channel which contained the boot and bonnet sealing rubbers. So although they look similar, Beetles have changed.

Enthusiasts will hanker after split rear-window models built until 1953, then the oval window models,

every one of the Beetle's 5,500 1958. Trouble is, those models, and adequate six volt electrics. There were five different engines used in the Beetle and the larger 1300cc and 1585cc units from the late Sixties and early Seventies are best for

keeping up with modern-day traffic. So leave the really early versions which stayed in production until to the purists. Nostalgia isn't what

it used to be, and neither are old Beetles. When in doubt, buy from an established specialist, use the guidance of the owner's clubs and get an expert to help you check a potential Beetle out

In the first instance, though, even the novice can spot whether a Beetle is worth taking seriously. Not surprisingly, rust is the model's biggest enemy. Look everywhere: pull up carpets and look closely around the wheel arches, wings, in the boot and around the suspension. The engines are reliable but prone to oil leaks and overheating. Interiors are generally hard wearing.

The good news with mechanical failures is that parts are relatively cheap and plentiful. Body panels. especially for the later models, are not a problem either. However, a full cost a lot of money. It is better to buy a a Beetle with sound bodywork but a failing engine, rather than the other way around. Try and look at plenty of Beetles: the more you see.

with their faults and the differences in condition. I know - I've looked.

Grundy Mack, a classic car dealer in Huddersfield, had a great value convertible, imported from Italy, for just £4,995. A blue 1966 model import at Grange Classics near Banbury was in excellent condition for £2,950. So there are bargains. But I also saw some rubbish from £800 in the local paper.

If looking for an old Beetle is too much trouble, then how about a brand new, old Beetle fresh from the Mexican factory? Beetles UK Ltd supply the latest specification, classic-shape examples with a modern 1.6 litre fuel-injected engine for just £7,995 on the road. Why bother with a modern, pseudo Beetle which is only a rebodied Golf, when restoration by an expert is going to you can buy an original in perfect working order at half the cost?

> Grange Classics, 01295 712777: Grundy Mack, 01484 450446:

My Worst Car

ANDY MCNAB'S RENAULT 5

It started best when hit with a hammer



THE FIRST Renault 5 I had was brilliant. It was a 1,100cc version and it had a vinyl sunroof, was terminally rusty and there was a bungee rope holding the front wing on. But despite all that, it was a

brilliant little runaround. I thought that by going to a Renault dealer and getting a loan, I'd have the pick of a very good crop of little cars. As it was, the used white Renault 5 that I chose proved to be a disaster.

It was the exhaust that went first. It fell off, but the dealer said that the warranty never covered it, so I had to pay out for that. The next thing to go was the starter motor. It was knackered and the only way to get it working, which meant somehow persuading the brushes inside to spin around, was to hit it with a hammer and a rod of steel.

Alternatively, I would just sit in the thing, if I couldn't be bothered to get out, and just rock it from side to side. That would get it going too. Within a year, serious rust started appearing just about everywhere. On top of all that, the electrics on the car were a right drama.

I bought a Renault 5 workshop manual, but that only meant that I made things 10 times worse. I took the dashboard to pieces and ended up leaving it hanging open. the ignition switch dangling at the end of some wires like it had enough, I must have done something right. The mess that I left behind actually made it work better.

After 18 months of hitting this Renault with a hammer. and living with an interior which looked as though a bomb had hit it, I had to get rid of the thing. I decided that I would get much more money for it by winding the mileage back. I used a Black & Decker power drill but made a hash of it because none of the numbers lined up.

Luckily, a local Citroen garage was doing a £500 part exchange deal against a Citroen BX. They didn't even want to see my old Renault. I just drove it onto the forecourt, took the keys to the BX and drove away. They probably threw the Renault in a bin. but the really ironic thing was I still had another year and a half of finance to pay off. So that Renault 5 didn't go away for quite some time.

Andy McNab's 'Brave Two Zero' video, starring Sean Bean is released by BBC Worldwide priced at £14.99. He was speaking to James Ruppert

The pick-up – or how to be a cowboy in Clapham

WHETHER IT'S fast food, motoring or bombing Iraq. Britain has a habit of following America. A few years after Henry Ford put America on wheels, Herbert Austin copied a trick or two in order to help motorise the UK.

Four-wheel drives are now the big thing in America, and have been for some time. And now, surprise, surprise, the segment of the market accelerating fastest here, and in Europe, is 4x4s, too.

There are, of course, some things that are peculiarly and uniquely American, such as pastrami-on-rye sandwiches, baseball and Yank Tank cars. Do pick-up trucks fall into the same

category? Or, like T-shirts, Disney stores and 4x4s, is this yet another Americanism bound to dilute our quaint cultural purity? The Yanks love 'em. So much so that the best selling vehicle in America this year - as with last year and the year before that - is the Ford F-series

pick-up. The Ford boss, Jac Nasser, once told me that the Yanks like pick-ups because basically, they are the modern equivalent of the horse. "There is a bit of the Wild West in every American," said Nasser. "And there is something very cowboy-like about the

pick-up truck." Pick-up sales are booming in the UK - they're up 46 per cent

on last year, albeit from a very modest base. And the best challenger, Mitsubishi's L200 pick-up, has only just hit Britain's fens, moors, motorways and high streets - at surprisingly low prices.

Before dismissing the pick-up as just another daft, eccentric Americanism, it's worth examining these over-sized Tonka Toys. Most of us may lead sober, sensible lives, but clearly when we visit our local car dealers we become more

Indiana Jones-like. "If everyone bought cars purely on sensible grounds, we'd all be driving Ford Fiestas," the ex-boss of Aston Martin, Victor Gauntlett, once told me. "Thank



Gavin Green

Pick-up sales are booming but unlikely to overtake 4x4s – we fancy ourselves as squires, not cowboys

God, when it comes to cars, most of us show pleasing signs

What could be crazier than buying vast 4x4s, with all that expensive off-road hardware and truck-like diesel or V8 engines, and then simply using them around town? It's crazy. but true. They don't even have any more carrying space, either for people or luggage, than a normal car.

The Mitsubishi L200 has all the advantages of a typical 4x4 - high driving position, Action Man styling, go-anywhere capability. There is nothing a new Land Rover Discovery (£25,520) can do that an L200 Double Cab "4 Life" (£19,195)

can't. To boot, the L200 has the carrying capacity of, well, a pickup. This adds to its "lifestyle" capability; to borrow one of the key phrases of the 4x4

propagandists.

The cargo area is big enough to put four mountain bikes, or a couple of jet skis, or there is even enough space for snowskiing equipment for a party of five. It's just as ideal for a major shopping expedition to Ikea or the local Homebase.

This is particularly useful in DIY-mad Britain. It's also great for horsey activities, another British eccentricity. A cargo bed cover is available to keep out fast-fingered felons.

On the road, the L200 is

surprisingly refined. It is quieter and smoother than the latest much-improved Discovery, and feels less truck-like to drive. It is also likely to be more reliable. The rear bench provides comfortable transport for three adults, helped by the vehicle's substantial width.

So is this the "Next Big Thing" in Britain? Probably not. Unlike the Yanks, we do not harbour a secret desire to be cowboys. (Instead, we fantasise about being country squires, which is why the Range Rover is so popular.) But if there was any sense in the car market - and there is not - more people would buy an L200 than any other large off-roader.

Bring down the holly and the ivy

f putting up Christmas decorations rates as one of the most enjoyable domestic jobs, then taking them down comes pretty close to the bottom of the ratings list. So pity the London flat owner who had to remove all evidence of her seasonal labours a day after she had completed her handiwork.

"A new client called to say that her South Kensington property was beautifully decorated and ready for the photographer" says Rebecca Read, of the estates agents Chrttons Daniel Smith. "I had visions of pristine paintwork and immaculate walls, but instead we walked into a Christmas-card scene. It had obviously taken hours to create. We then had to break it to the owner that everything had to come down."

A key objective of all property photographers is to produce as unseasonal a picture as possible. Another is to avoid clutter. Read says: "There were gariands and crackers, cards and candles. All the presents had been wrapped and beautifully laid out. It took an hour to move just the Christmas tree, which was huge.

"The owner couldn't see the problem and thought she had done a marvellous job. We had to explain how inappropriate it would look in a brochure by the second week of January, let alone the spring."

It is not unusual to find Read in a client's bare winter garden with armfuls of silk flowers. "We dot them round so that buyers have an idea of what it looks like in the summer. You have to be careful not to use anything exotic."

Her vast bag of flowers comes into its own for the interior shots. The real thing, though, can be a trap for the unwary. Poinsettias and Christmas cactii in full flower should be banished from the room if a photographer is en route. And as for the hosts of golden daffodils that sellers long to share with each prospective buyer, they are banned from the sights of every camera. No one in September can pass off a house surrounded by dancing daffodils as a

recent arrival on the market. Just about everything we seize on to photograph for the family album - three feet of snow on the lawn, the old cherry tree in blossom and mantlepieces weighed down under holly branches and fir cones - are the last pictures that any selling

"You have to listen to what clients photography, but they are also paying for your advice. Far too many a deal on Christmas Eve or between



All dressed up: seasonal decorations - such as these adorning a bouse in Dundee - can hinder the sale of a home

pes

things become distractions and you have to say if a house is overdressed. The interiors should appear as large and inviting as possible," says Edward Rook, from the country house department of Knight Frank. This could well mean turning on the lamps, opening the curtains and the fires blazing all at once.

Unless a buyer has an obsession with Christmas, festive decorations agent wants to see in the particulars. are not going to clinch a sale. Yet most people feel their homes look say because they are paying for most inviting at this time of year. "There is always a chance of doing

Christmas and the New Year," says Rook. "Tastefully placed holly and a lovely tree can add warmth and atmosphere, but the same cannot be said if rooms are decked out with streamers and paper chains made by four-year-olds."

Knight Frank issues advice to its photographers with tips which include lawns mown in stripes, stable doors left open, the gravel raked and tables laid for a meal. Chris Wood, a property and interiors photographer who helped dismantle the decorations in the South Kensington flat, is used to rearranging people's

homes. "I draw the line at washing up the dirty plates, though."

The crucial art of making a room look as large as possible is not helped by the current trend for beige. "If you have a pale carpet, walls, ceiling and furniture, it all blends into an indistinguishable whole," says Wood. "A rug, a vase of flowers or cushions are enough to break it up. Yellow always works well in pictures while black always looks terrible even if it has a fancy finish."

Wood tries to put himself in the shoes of whoever opens the brochure. This often means turning a

deaf ear to the seller's suggestions. "Even if you can stand with your back in the oven and see 60ft to the end of the drawing room, I have to try to explain that it will make a terrible picture."

Vendors can pay upto several thousand pounds for a brochure and their opinions cannot be dismissed out of hand. "The debate with clients about which photographs to use can go on for hours," says Richard Gayner, from the country department of FPD Savills. "They often fix on aerial shots or they want the house to be seen from different angles, whereas we want to show just enough to encourage buyers to jump in the car. In the country the

setting is the most important issue." Gayner tells a story that will warm the heart of anyone desperately trying to keep a large house in viewing order. "A wealthy family arranged to meet an agent at a country house, only to tell him on their arrival that they didn't want to go in. When he asked why not he was told that it might put them off buying it." Just what those of us who wouldn't dare let a photographer

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Day the developers met their match

In the Eighties, Bow Quarter was conceived as a fun place for young people. Now, the recession over, these loft-dwellers are thriving again. By Robert Liebman

THIS VILLAGE shop has the usual staples plus a special range of food and videos designed to appeal to the locals. Gnat's piss wine. Tarragon and lime mayonnaise. Own-brand hand-made fudge. I blush to tell you the names of the videos, but Sheldon does San Francisco would capture their essence.

The village which this particular shop caters for is Bow Quarter, the residential conversion on the site of the Bryant & May matchstick factory in Bow, east London.

The original factory buildings occupy a portion of the seven-acre site, and a few years ago Ballymore built an additional 170 flats on adjacent land within the estate, providing a total of 700 flats, in seven blocks, and 18 town houses. In July the shop invited all residents to a

champagne reception to celebrate its sixth birthday. Bow Quarter itself is 10 years old, a mixed community which has managed to survive several near-death experiences. In the late Eighties, the developer Kentish

Homes had a great idea: bring New York-style loft and factory living to London in a historically and architecturally distinct building in an affordable part of town. However, following the recession. Kentish Homes went belly up with debts of more than £20m. In came the receivers, mostly in the form of

KPMG's Roger Oldfield. "When I arrived, Bow Quarter was a building site, and about 100 people had exchanged contracts. They wanted out, and they claimed that the brochure had deceived them. But the brochure didn't contain architectural drawings. They hadn't bought off-plan. They bought off an artist's lifestyle drawings." The brochure depicted an outdoor swimming-pool and an ice rink, but Oldfield notes that this

was artistic licence, not elements of a contract. "Rumours spread that we were going to put a prison and a hospital on the grounds," says Oldfield. "The tenants formed the Bow Quarter Action Group and, to avoid having to complete,

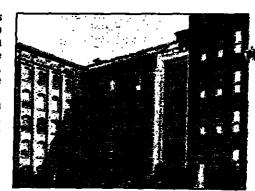
they fought to [make] the project fail. We pro-

duced our own brochure. We upgraded to put in a pool and gym." The case reached the High Court, which decided in the receiver's favour. The flats were built in one section of the factory, and under a new developer, London Buildings, the remaining flats

Three show-flats in three distinct styles were created, including Andrew Logan's upsidedown ceiling sculpture of a naked couple frolicking on Astroturi Marketing of the Bow Quarter was similarly inventive. The marketing guru George Kozlowski's London Underground advertising campaign included more nudity and a promise of subsidised mortgages.

were constructed and sold.

The Astroturf gimmick attracted press at-tention, and the allure of free money promised by the Tube cards hooked the architect Martin Crowley: "I got nearly ten grand in subsidy," he recalls. "I was nearly 60, but I was a firsttime buyer." For Crowley, the subsidy made



Bryant & May's old match factory was converted into residential flats

the difference between buying and just looking. The basic residential unit in the Bryant & May buildings is long, narrow and tall. The architect Oliver Richards, who had been with the project for a short time at the beginning and was brought back in by London Buildings, designed the remaining flats to be open-plan, spread across two and three units.

Martin Crowley's flat is on the top floor and. like all fifth-floor flats, is triple height, with a balcony. "It is a real community," he says, "It is secure, and we live according to rules. Although I had six years of negative equity, I've been here ever since, and I'm going out feet first."

Some residents live, love and leave. Roger Black is a former architect and project manager who worked on as well as lived in Bow Quarter for five years. "Our apartment was designed for young people. It had a young atmosphere about it. It became tiresome. It was also a bit far out of town for us. We are now in Bloomsbury."

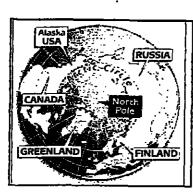
Mr Kozlowski similarly notes the youthfulness of the place: "Properties are not expensive. You are not just paying for a roof over your head; part of the attraction is its almost college campus atmosphere. Bow Quarter is great for people who are young, single and eager. If you are looking for a place that booches, this is it." A one-bedroom flat with balcony and car space

sells for £80,000, and two bedrooms command closer to £135,000. Many tenants are renters. Bow Quarter has a swimming-pool and a fitness centre, a bar, a 24-hour controlled entry security lodge and communal satellite TV and laundry rooms. The original buildings are listed, including a water tower now containing a fivelevel flat. The residents collectively own the

Bryant & May freehold. A single agent manages the development for both freeholders. For residents generally, the worst is probably over, Mr Kozlowski surmises: "It was built in fits and starts. I'm pleasantly relieved and flattered it survived. It could have been a major disaster. As it is, it's a major success story.

Bow Quarter Residents Management, Fairfield Road. London E3 2UP (0181-983 0078)

Des res includes on-site parking for eight reindeer



EVERY YULETIDE, one of the coldest regions on earth is a hot spot - the North Pole. Only one property exists at the Pole itself, and although it is far from lavish, it is a large and interesting piece of real estate which, should il ever come on to the market, is sure to attract considerable interest.

The occupier is an elderly man who would seem ripe for joining the bungalow brigade. Managing director of his own global delivery firm, he is corpulent well into the red zone, and his job is physically punishing, even though he works only one day a year. He nevertheless seems determined to see his lease out, even though it still has about 550 years to run.

The property itself contains - in estate agent terminology, comprises - a massive workshop, ample staff accommodation and on-site parking for a minimum of eight reindeer.

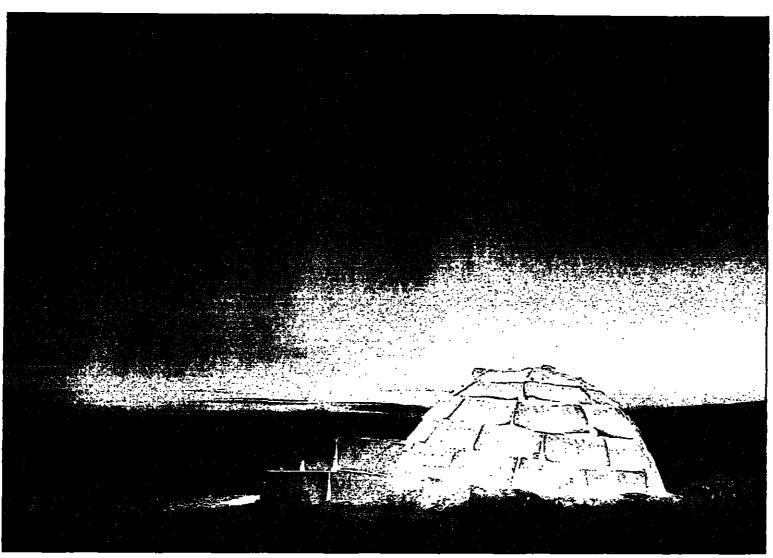
The lease contains a highly unusual restrictive covenant. These covenants generally prohibit work altogether or strictly limit the kind of work that may take place in a property, but these premises must be used as a workshop producing children's toys. This highly unusual covenant is the notorious

Several countries claim the property. The Arctic Circle includes parts notes: "The North Pole is on Canadiof America (Alaska division), Canada. Greenland, Finland, and Russia.

Santa's familiar red and white are the national colours of Canada. Danish children address their letters to the er and Internet address, at Napapiiri, be heartened to learn, preferably "Julemanden" in Greenland, and receive replies

In fact, Santa replies to children This part of Finland has abundant ice from many countries. Erja Tikka, and snow but is hardly the most ral shape, and the entire structure's press counsellor at the Finnish Em- northerly of Finnish towns and villages bassy, says: "These other countries" and, for nearness to the North Pole, our Santa might as well be in Ecuador. post office receives 700,000 letters a year, so Finland has clearly won also closer to the Pole and contain a that competition."

Try telling that to the Canadians. Lynne Boyer of Canada's Office of an High Commissioner has revealed,



There's no place like it for a guaranteed white Christmas - the problem is persuading Santa to sell

almost exclusively to The Indepen-

World Pictures

LOWDOWN

Transport: The world's most northerly railway line is at Ny Alesund, Norway, Otherwise, transport goes to the dogs. South-facing gardens? At the North Pole, they all are. Council tax: For 1998/1999. Band A: Frankincense. Band H:

number plate": The correct postal code for Father Christmas in the United Kingdom is SANTA1, and in

Canada it is HOH HOH. His Finnish website address is http://www.santaclausoffice fi Furs R Us: Shopping options are limited. When winter arrives there is not much to do except wait six months for summer and daylight to return. Otherwise, the Arctic has mud and mineral pools, dogsledge races and the Northern Lights. Rovaniemi is a winter-

THREE TO VIEW

WITH TWO BEDROOMS



village farm in Acol, near Birchington in Kent. At the entrance to the former farmyard, the Grade II, weather-boarded grain store has been converted into a two-bedroom home that has bags

It has a 19ft 5in sitting room with vaulted ceiling. stripped wooden floor and period-style radiators. The kitchen is irregularly shaped, fitted with modern units, and has a built-in oven and hob and a wooden floor. There will be parking for two cars. The asking price is £85,000 through GW Finn & Sons



THIS OLD terraced cottage, called Starboard, is just yards from the tidal waters of Stonehouse Pool, near Plymouth, and is thought to have been built as servants' quarters for a big estate in 1798. It later became a sailmaker's premises. Now a two-bedroom home, it has a sitting room, dining room and 24ft kitchen on the ground floor, with a further sitting room on the first floor, with views over the water. The main bedroom on the second floor has a high ceiling with exposed roof trusses. Outside there's a rear walled garden and a garage. £93,000 through Punch & Roche (01752 267477).

SHIPWRIGHT'S COTTAGE in Salcombe south Devon, is the kind of cottage you dream about when stuck in the city on a dreary winter's day. The renovated, early 19th-century, threestorey house has views across the estuary and the beaches, and is almost in front of the starting line for dinghy racing. The whitepainted cottage has a bedsitting room on the



ground floor, with window seat and storage under. and a recessed wardrobe. On the first floor, there's a 11ft 9in sitting room with views over the water, stone fireplace and exposed ceiling beams. The second room is on the second floor along with en suite shower rooms. Offers over £175,000 to Marchand Petit (01548 844473).

ROSALIND RUSSELL

STEPPING STONES

A WRITER'S PROPERTY STORY



CHILDREN'S WRITER Lorna Read has bought seven properties since 1979. For her first purchase, Lorna plumped for a first-floor flat opposite a pickle factory in Ealing which cost £16,000.

Lorna soon found her patience stretched by a barman neighbour who "played bongo drums until dawn". In 1983, she sold for £24,000 and moved on to a two-up, two-down in west Ealing for £35,000.

Three years later, after "a broken live-in romance and daily hell beneath Concorde's flight path" Lorna sold for £59,000 and, for the same price, bought a one-bedroom flat in Belsize Park. Within days it was back on the market: "I found myself living beneath 'the elephants'.' A year later Lorna sold

for £75,000 and bought a tiny one-bed attic flat in Hampstead. Here she "churned out several novels" in three years. The Northern Line at

the bottom of the garden proved a disruption, though, and in 1990 she sold for £94,000, moving up to a brand new house in a cul-de-sac in Crouch End for £160,000. Unruly neighbours made her regret this purchase and a year later she sold for £140,00, moving the next

year to a £118,000 maisonette with roof terrace in Dartmouth Park

Five years later Lorna made what she describes as her second big mistake: "I'd passed 50 and yearned for a detached suburban house." She paid £165,000 for a property in Uxbridge but, just two weeks later. Lorna's dream turned into a nightmare of "boredom and hellish late night journeys home from

Last September she sold for £168,000, and is currently looking for a house in north London. GINETTA VEDRICKAS

THOSE MOVES IN BRIEF 1979 – bought Ealing flat for £16,000, sold for £24,000. 1983 - bought Ealing cottage for £35,000, sold for £59,000. 1986 - bought Belsize Park flat for £59,000 sold for £75,000. 1987 - bought Hampstead attic for £75,000, sold for

£94.00. 1990 - bought Crouch end house for £160,000, sold for £140,00 in 1991. 1992 - bought Dartmouth Park flat for £118,000, sold for £215,000. 1997 – bought Uxbridge detached for £165,000, sold for £168,000 later that year

dent, instructions for building an igloo based on Inuit building practices. For starters, says the helpful in-

formation sheet, you need plenty of snow and, rail officials in Britain will the right type of snow - crunchy and hard-packed. The blocks are laid down in a spi-

strength depends on the placement of the final block at the tip. Large families can be accommodated in several igloos connected by passageways.

Canada's northern territories are huge swathe of government-owned igloos. location is everything. land ideal for squatters. The Canadi-

Strategic Communications Planning.

an territory, so Santa is, technically, a

In Finnish Lapland, Mr Claus main-

tains an office. complete with Web serv-

near Rovaniemi, and he makes daily

appearances in nearby Korvatunturi.

Canadian citizen."

Crucially, "the best location is beside a gently sloping hill," Even for ROBERT LIEBMAN

sports resort.

Bedroom, bathroom, wine store – a cellar can add a whole new room to your life. By Gwenda Joyce-Brophy

It's dark, underground - and would like to enter your home

WHEN STUART Jones, an estate agent with Westminster Properties, recently inspected a cellar in a north-west London property, he expected to find the all-too common dark, dank, rubbishstrewn area. Instead, he discovered a fully-equipped, hi-tech studio - the owner was a member of a band who had put the cellar to productive use. Stephen Elliot of the Basement

Development Group (BDG), would be impressed. The organisation promotes the use and development of the under-utilised space below ground. "At the very least, a cellar is a great storage resource," he says, "particularly in these minimalist times." Resourceful cellar owners have

been turning their cellar into a den, or an extra bedroom for guests. "We have seen quite a few examples of cellars being used in this way," says Nick Goble of the estate agents Winkworths in Battersea. It is, unsurprisingly, more common in one-bedroom flats, where extra space is at a premium. "In many cases though, the owners

have not tanked the cellar properly. Tanking is the process whereby the cellar is made watertight. "If the cellar is to provide living space, then you certainly need to protect it from penetrating dampness and mould growth," says Mr Elliot. "Even if you are just using it for storage, you don't want your stuff going mouldy." He advises consulting a surveyor to check for signs of damp, "and if you decide to go ahead with any work, use a builder who has sound experience in cellar work - contact the Federation of Master Builders for names."

Chris Evans, a development control manager at Bromley Borough Council, advises writing to your local authority with any plans early on, particularly if there is likely to be any structural change - a term which can cover merely installing a window. "Any work will need to comply with building regulations," he says.

The BDG produces several documents aimed at builders or rehabilitation specialists, which give advice and specifications for the basic through to what Mr Elliot terms "pukka" conversions. "You can intro-

Ironically, some cellars are too warm to store wine. Not to worry. Norcool will convert it into a huge fridge

duce internal waterproofing, or incorporate additional ventilation and/or dehumidification," he says.

However, Mr Elliot warns of getting carried away: "You need to consider carefully the practicality of any work you do, as well as the cost. Finding out whether improvements in thermal performance or habitability, for example, can be achieved within your budget, is crucial".

While the word "cellar" is one that makes the eyes of many a buyer light up, it should not make pound signs kits and refrigeration units that will

ties where the cellar has been made into a bathroom," says Lisa Keating of Bushells estate agents in Clapham. However, taking into account the costs of tanking, tiling etc., there is clearly no large profit involved, putting around \$5,000 on the price of a £120,000 flat. Nick Goble of Winkworths is cautious about such usage. "Downstairs bathrooms are not popular," he says, "and you have the difficulty of ensur-

ing adequate ventilation in a cellar." For many people, however, it is the opportunity of having a "real" wine cellar that lies in their yearning for a cellar "When I bought this flat, I had looked at several properties, but it was the cellar that clinched the decision to buy it," says Nicholas Richards who lives in east London. "I love having a wine collection maturing in the cellar. Wine cellar" has a certain social cachet about it, and a well maintained

one may impress future buyers. "One of the most impressive cellars I have seen was a wine cellar in a Victorian two-bedroom flat in Brondesbury," recalls Westminster's Stuart Jones. "The owners were serious wine lovers, so they knew all about temperature, light, and humidity control - and having no strong smells nearby. Usually I am tripping over halfused cans of paint and other chemicals in cellars, but this one was in pristine condition."

Ironically, given their damp image, some cellars can, perversely, be too dry and warm for keeping wine. One organisation, Norcool, produce door



The converted cellar can be put to all sorts of uses

maintain a constant, appropriate temperature within your existing cellar, although you need to insulate the cellar", says Norcool's Christine Martin. "We can do this, or provide the necessary information for people to carry

out the work themselves". Even those in upper-floor, centrally heated apartments, need no longer be deprived of the joys of a cellar. Nor-cool will install a cool, moist "cellar" for storing and maturing wines almost anywhere in your property.

But will turning your spare bed-room into a giant fridge mean you are subjected to loud humming that keeps you awake at night? Apparently not. "The cooling unit has been designed to be low-noise", says Ms Martin. And if a future buyer doesn't share your enthusiasm for your "upstairs cellar", you can remove the units and doors and take them with you,

Basement Waterproofing Design Guide, co-sponsored by the British Cement Association and the British structural Waterproofing Association, is available from the Basement Development Group. 01344 762676; Federation of Master Builders. 0171-242 7583: Norcool Appliances Ltd, 01302 751223. Door kits cost £250-500, and refrigeration units around £1,200; Winkworths estate agents.

BARGAIN HUNTER



PROPERTY OF THE WEEK Home brew

IF THIS former brewer's cottage was in London, it would cost at least twice as much as its asking price of £135,000. However, the late-17th-century house is in Farnham, Surrey, in a conservation area near the town centre.

The cottage has been modernised but retains the original oak doors, open fireplace and old beams. It has a 16ft 6in sitting-room, with fitted cupboards either side of the brick fireplace and a stable door to the garden. The 15ft 8in kitchen/breakfast room has a modern quarry-tiled floor, pine-fronted units and windows to three sides. There is a 40ft, private, south-facing garden, but there is also a right of way over a side footpath for the people who live in the adjoining cottage. Details from Keats (01252 718018). ROSALIND RUSSELL

CAR OF THE WEEK Less is Morgan

IT'S CHRISTMAS, so go on, treat yourself to something uncomfortable, old-fashioned - and rather wonderful.

There is no sane reason for buying a Morgan, but plenty of emotional ones for investing in this 1930s throwback. It is hand-built - actually fussed over by craftsman's hands - and its rock-hard suspension and minimal wet-weather protection refuse to pamper driver and passenger. To get a new one means waiting until Christmas 2005, so it's advisable to buy a used one. Bridge Garage (01702 296109), in Essex, has a 9,000-mile model, finished in seasonal white and marked down from £21,995 to £19,995 - about what the first owner paid for it in 1994.

DEAL OF THE WEEK

The mortgage for non-cabinet members

FINDING A cheap mortgage is not always easy. So here's my top tip for the Christmas break: get in touch with Geoffrey Robinson.

Home loans from Mr Robinson have in the past been set at bank base rates, a far more favourable charge than that operated by any mortgage lender. The only drawback is that you must be a Labour MP to qualify.

If you are not one of the lucky MPs, here's an alternative Christmas mortgage cracker. Market Harborough Building Society is launching a five-year fixed-rate deal, pegged at 5.75 per cent. Redemption penalties apply only in the fixed period. Some compulsory insurances are needed, but in the case of accident, sickness and unemployment cover it is - at £1.50 per £100 of monthly mort-

gage repayments - one of the cheapest in the market. Market Harborough also offers a two-year fix at 4.99 per cent. It may not be good enough for Peter Mandelson, but it will have to do for the rest of us. Call 01858 463244.

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broken, you have an unequivocal right to

your money back under the Sale of Goods

Act, which promises a full refund on any

item "of unsatisfactory quality" or "not fit

many parents today who have paid a high

price for a big box with not much inside.

straight that it was "not worth the money".

He stopped short of recommending

that I didn't buy it but did warn that I would

be paying nearly £20 for a bar of chocolate,

half a packet of biscuits and a couple of

moulds. Those who have coughed up on

similarly disappointing packages face a

The Office of Fair Trading says "satis-

factory quality" can involve very subjective

judgements. Consumers can only complain

to their local trading standards office.

Even where goods are obviously broken.

shoppers need to act quickly. A full refund

hard struggle for compensation.

the earliest opportunity.

DECEMBER IS a strange month in the City Traders are more concerned with Christmas parties than stock positions, while investment managers take the opportunity to carry out some year-end

window dressing. Given that most institutional funds enjoy a positive cashflow, this usually involves committing uninvested cash to stocks - hence December generally means a positive performance in stock market terms. The Santa effect is just weight of money - goodwill does not

even feature Some years have been quite remarkably active for what is otherwise a holiday period. In 1969. the Australian mining market received a fillip from speculation over potential winners in the platinum stakes. Two stocks actively traded on Christmas Eve reached heights not subsequently regained, causing a few lost fortunes. So intense was the trading that I was late for my celebratory Christmas lunch.

1998 has been much quieter. Part of the reason is the euro - due in just a week's time. Trading in European issues - both bond and equity - had pretty much evaporated mid-December. It seems no one wished to get caught out by settlement problems once the new

currency was in place. The euro effect is unquantifiable. Business and commerce well know that the relationship between the dollar and the euro will be all important in the new year. Make no mistake, the euro will be an important currency. Europe is arguably the biggest trading bloc in the world, with considerable ground to make up as it chases its transatlantic rival.

This makes the assumption, of course, that you treat the EU - or that part of it embracing the euro – as a single trading nation. While not strictly true, there is little doubt that many analysts are taking this view. If this



BRIAN TORA

In the end, staying outside the single European currency may not be an option

is the right way to look at Europe, then we can expect dramatic changes

in the years to come. For example, 25 per cent of Americans own mobile phones, compared with 13 per cent of Germans and around 15 per cent in France. Sweden has a massive 37 per cent penetration of its population.

The difference in PC penetration is even greater. There are 35 PCs for every 100 people in the US, while the German figure is less than half and the French lower still. The Italians, who have a high level of interest in communication technology.

strangely barely feature. The same is true of the stockmarket. Britain has the most developed equity market in Europe but will not be in the euro. The amount of progress that could be made in the rest of euroland is staggering.

Of one thing you can be sure; this time next year it will all look very different. If the euro works - not guaranteed - expect UK companies to start listing shares in euros and sterling. A successful introduction of the currency will also inevitably hasten the merger of European stock exchanges. In the end, staying outside the single European currency may not be an option.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton investment strategy committee

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awful - but getting your money back could be tricky. By Teresa Hunter BOXING DAY was once the highlight of the season's festivities, when employers distributed Christmas "boxes" to devoted employees and servants. However, in modern Britain it is the day when reality somewhat belatedly sinks in. It hits us like a hangover, the orgy of spending in which we squandered billions of pounds on overpriced presents that no one wanted. And so back to the shops, where the pre-turkey smiles of helpful sales assistants have been replaced by the churlish frowns of the jobsworths. And where the queue itself doesn't defeat you, the law conspires with retailers to make it as difficult as possible for you to get your money back. Where something has turned out to be

95 000 7.00% Year

All present and correct

for Christmas refunds

The toy is broken, the cardigan doesn't fit, and the perfume smells

£10.995 7.37V

for the purpose". However, "unsatisfactory quality" does not extend to "value for Getting a refund might cause more money", which will be a sore point with pain than actually wearing them SDR

refund, if that is what you want. I scoured several high streets for a Aside from faulty goods, your statutory chocolate-making kit, one of the big sellers rights for an exchange or refund are more limited. In fact they are zilch. Under the this season, of which there are a number on the market. When I finally found some law, if you don't like the colour or an item at a large toy chain, the manager told me doesn't fit you, that's tough.

However, most of our major retailers will offer some form of exchange, provided you have a receipt. But their refund policies are

The shop manager himself warned me that the kit was not worth the money

complex, and some items, such as cosis mandatory only where the goods have not been "legally accepted", which means metics, underwear and swimwear, are that they must be returned to the store at never accepted back.

Dixons, which owns Currys, PC World and The Link, will not offer anything at all Don't be fobbed off with the offer of a without a receipt. Even with one, you must repair, a credit note or a return of the goods return an item within seven days or it's to the manufacturer. Your contract was with the retailer, and you are owed a full cash yours for life, except for mobile phones, which can be returned after 14 days. Headphones, software, pre-recorded videos, tapes and CDs must be sealed.

The Kingfisher group has different rules for all its stores. B&Q will give you your money back or exchange only with a receipt and within 28 days of purchase. Without a receipt you are on your own. Woolworths, also part of the Kingfisher

group, will offer an exchange or gift vouchers without a receipt, but warns that it may refer faulty products to the supplier to establish the fault. Forget that, you are owed a full refund. Superdrug is alone among cosmetic retailers, in that it will offer a no-quibble

promise to refund the purchase price on health and beauty products even without a receipt. But this extends only to Superdrug branded products. Refunds and exchanges are given on other brands only with a receipt. At MVC, also within the Kingfisher

group, it is all much more civilised. Every purchase is computerised, so the store itself knows what was bought and where. This means that full refunds are available, irrespective of receipts. John Lewis, Boots and Marks & ¶

Spencer all operate a similar policy of offering cash refunds with a receipt and either an exchange or vouchers without, provided the item is in tip-top condition. But what happens when you don't know

the price? In some stores it's simple, because they re-barcode the label every time the price changes.

However, Marks & Spencer, one of the few stores with no time limit on exchanges or refunds, says that it relies on customers' honesty on price

A spokesman says: "We ask when it was bought, and that is the price they get. If someone tells us it was a Christmas present, even though the item has been selling at half that price in the sale for more

than a month, we refund the pre-sale price. "Of course, there is nothing to stop someone buying in the sale, then returning the item and claiming it was bought for more, and receiving an exchange for a higher value. But we prefer to err on the side of the customer, rather than suspect everyone of fraud."



Despite dire predictions from the likes of George Soros, fears of another Thirties-style Depression have so far proved unfounded

Stock markets will get a reality check, but when?

safely under the belt, and thoughts are starting to turn to the prospects of the New Year it seems an appropriate time to ask the question that most stock-market followers have been asking for some months: can the market in 1999 avoid the serious setback that so briefly, but dramatically, threatened in the course of late summer 1998?

As it turns out, rather like 1987. when historians come to look back on the charts for 1998, the crisis of the summer will appear merely as a significant blip, not as a serious or enduring dislocation. Both the US and UK markets look like ending the year showing comfortable gains of around 10-15 per cent, just as 1987 ended with the markets showing a modest rise, despite the great cataclysm in October of that year.

It means that there have now only been two vears in the last 20 in which shares have not shown a positive total return, a quite remarkable record of sustained success by historical standards. tinued strong performance of gilts. which in an era of declining inflation are now firmly back in the fold of respectable mainstream assets.

Gilts were the strongest performing asset class in 1998, just as they were in 1997 - and in fact have more than matched the performance of equities over the course of the 1990s, with a string idouble-digit total returns. (Who would have thought a few years ago that we would have lived to see the much maligned War Loan selling at 76p in the pound, as it was this week?)

When it comes to looking forward, however, some now all-too-familiar doubts keep crowding in. The IMF, in its latest forecast out this week, specifically identified the risk of a stock market correction as one of the five most important risks hanging over the world economy. I have yet to meet a sensible or thoughtful professional investor who does not recognise the force of that concern. Alan Greenspan, the chairman of he Federal Reserve, has demonstratd his remarkable ability to sustain the



JONATHAN **DAVIS**

It will not be surprising if 1999 does at last see the down year in the US and UK stock markets

confidence of the markets through the liquidity crisis of the summer. But his balancing act cannot continue forever without the risk of another serious mishap.

Knowing that the markets are fundamentally overvalued, but worried at collision with reality, Greenspan's problem is that every time be succeeds in deflating one crisis, he merely recreates the problem that exercised him in the first place - which is the risk that an overinflated stock market will create a consumer boom that can only end in tears, just as the property boom of the

With the world economy having slowed dramatically, and a spate of profseemingly having little effect on Wall Street, there is every sign that the stock market there is indeed entering a period of unsustainable divorce from reality. A price/earnings ratio of 24 is making an awful lot of positive assumptions about future profits performance, which sit very uncomfortably with the trend of earnings Andrew Smithers, the fund man-

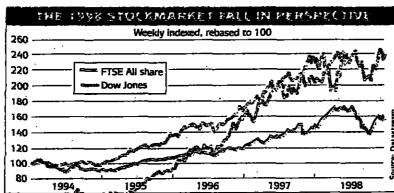
it warnings from leading US companies

agement consultant, observes that, as usual in economics, the issue is not whether but when the stock market correction takes place. The timing cannot be predicted with confidence and it may take some time yet - but that it will in due course happen is inevitable. It need not be the end of the world, but it could still be quite nasty.

The dilemma for investors in the meantime is what they are to do about it: only a fool will want to avoid enjoying the fruits of the good times while they last, but at the same time prudence suggests it would be unwise to be lulled into the feeling that the stock market can a year indefinitely.

Admittedly, there are some consolations around. I note that George Soros, whose public pronouncements I have always found to be an invaluable contrarian indicator, has published a book warning that global capitalism is in serious crisis.

He describes the current bounceback in markets as a "false dawn" that could be followed by "a profound bear market,



rently". If he thinks that things are so bad, then maybe we are indeed poised to live through an economic miracle. The Economist, which also tends to be right about things, but far too early (it has been predicting \$10 a barrel of oil since around 1985), thinks that the market is now so overvalued that it no longer makes sense to assume automatically that the stock market is still the best long-term home for savings - an assumption that has become an accepted part of conventional wisdom in the

US and, to a lesser extent, over here. These are all sombre warnings from clever people. The fact is, however, that the great market setback has been predicted with great regularity for at least three years and has yet to happen. Seeing the experts confounded is an enduring and innocent source of pleasure.

It is clear that most of the gloomy market pundits have relied too heavily on the assumption that the market will in time revert to its traditional valuation parameters. They have overlooked the powerful specific forces (which include demographics and co-ordinated disin flationary policies) that have helped to keep this phase of the bull market going for so long. All buil markets, we have long been told, must climb a wall of worry, and this one has proved its credentials in spectacular fashion.

But it would be a mistake to say: "To hell with the pundits, and let's just go with the flow." A couple of months ago I asked Barton Biggs, the highly respected market strategist at Morgan Stanley, what he thought would happen to the markets following Greenspan's latest interest-rate cut.

His view was that "the Fed has panicked". The market would inevitably bounce back strongly till the end of the year, he thought, before reality finally set in one last time. I fear that this time he may be right. Making market forecasts is, as I have frequently pointed out, a mug's game, but I am going to be brave and say that I will not be surprised if 1999 does at last see the down year in the US and UK stock markets that so many have forecast for so long. It will, I hasten to add, be a pleasure to be proved wrong.

The year of the Net

SO WERE you dreaming of an Internet Christmas The hype from the United States claims more spending on Christmas by Americans over the Internet than across shop counters. That I find difficult to believe. But believe this: 1998 has been the year that the Internet came of age.

In January, the first ever online mortgage offer was launched by the broker, Paragon Mortgages. Internet insurance policies became commonplace, with more than a dozen sites offering travel insurance policies and a handful providing motor and household insurance. Electronic banking has

taken off after much hype over the past 12 months. Barclays Bank has an off-Web operation, its own PC banking intranet, while the UK pioneer of Web-based banking, the Nationwide **Building Society, offered** itself as an Internet service provider as well.

Royal Bank of Scotland.



INVESTOR

ROBIN AMLÔT

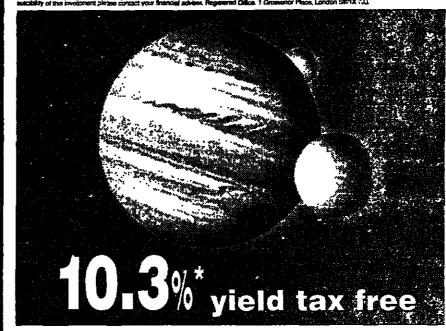
Citibank, Co-operative Bank, the Prudential, Norwich & Peterborough Building Society and Lloyds all made significant moves on the Net. The net result of all this activity, if you like, is that around half a million of us now use the Internet or an intranet to manage our money.

Investing in shares via the Internet lags - at least in the UK, where our savings culture is not so directly focused on the equity market as in the US.

There, stockbroker Charles Schwab says its Internet dealings hit a record of 121,000 trades in a day in November, In the UK, takeup has not been as swift, partly because the supposed benefits of Web trading - significantly lower costs - have yet to be passed on to individual customers, Nevertheless, a significant development of direct electronic trading occurred when Charles Schwab completed the first deal with a fully automated Web trade going through at 9.11am on 14 December.

The new "straight through" system allows individual investors to buy and sell shares via direct computer links. Previously. all Web-based broking services were really just glorified e-mail offerings. In future, individual investors will be able to execute buyand-sell orders at "best price" and place their own limit orders.

Robin Amlot can be reached at RobinAmlotia aol.com



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The insiders' guide to 1999

What were the best travel discoveries of 1998, and where should you be going next year? By Caroline Murphy

or travellers and the travel industry alike, 1998 has proved a momentous year. While the World Cup disrupted travel in our favourite foreign country, France, British Airways sold two million flights in a weekend at absurdly low prices. The travel industry consolidated, so that much of it is now in the hands of a few huge companies, while the small specialists extended their tentacles into ever more exotic territory. For the soundest advice from the travel experts, we asked intrepid explorers and industry insiders for their best travel discovery of 1998 - and their top travel tip for 1999.

"My favourite place in 1998 was Mato Grosso in the Amazon. It's an amazing bit of forest, really beautiful - and it still has lots of jaguars and turtles. For me what is so exciting is that this was where Colonel Fawcett disappeared. He was the explorer who set out to look for a city of gold. It might even still be there!

"For 1999 I'd recommend going to Mongolia. There's nowhere in the world that is so nomadic, almost half the population lives in tents. But not for much longer, since the country is opening up quickly. Get there before the nomads settle down like the rest

Benedict Allen, explorer and author of 'Edge of Blue Heaven'

"1998 was the year I discovered the rollercoaster in a Las Vegas hotel called New York New York. Go to the top of the skyscraper and hurtle down for the scariest ride of your life.

"My tip for a great holiday in 1999 is to buy your holiday now. Travel agents will be trying to breathe some life into the flagging retail market by pushing silly bargains after

Jeremy Skidmore, editor of Travel Weekly`newspaper

"My best travel discovery of 1998 was without a doubt the Sierra Madre mountains in northern Mexico. The canyons are staggeringly deep and quite tourist-free.

"At the Tsodilo Hills in the Botswana desert - the sacred site of the bushmen -I literally stumbled into a new camp being established by a guy called Andy Mac-Gregor. It's the perfect place to see in the

Martin Buckley, traveller and writer

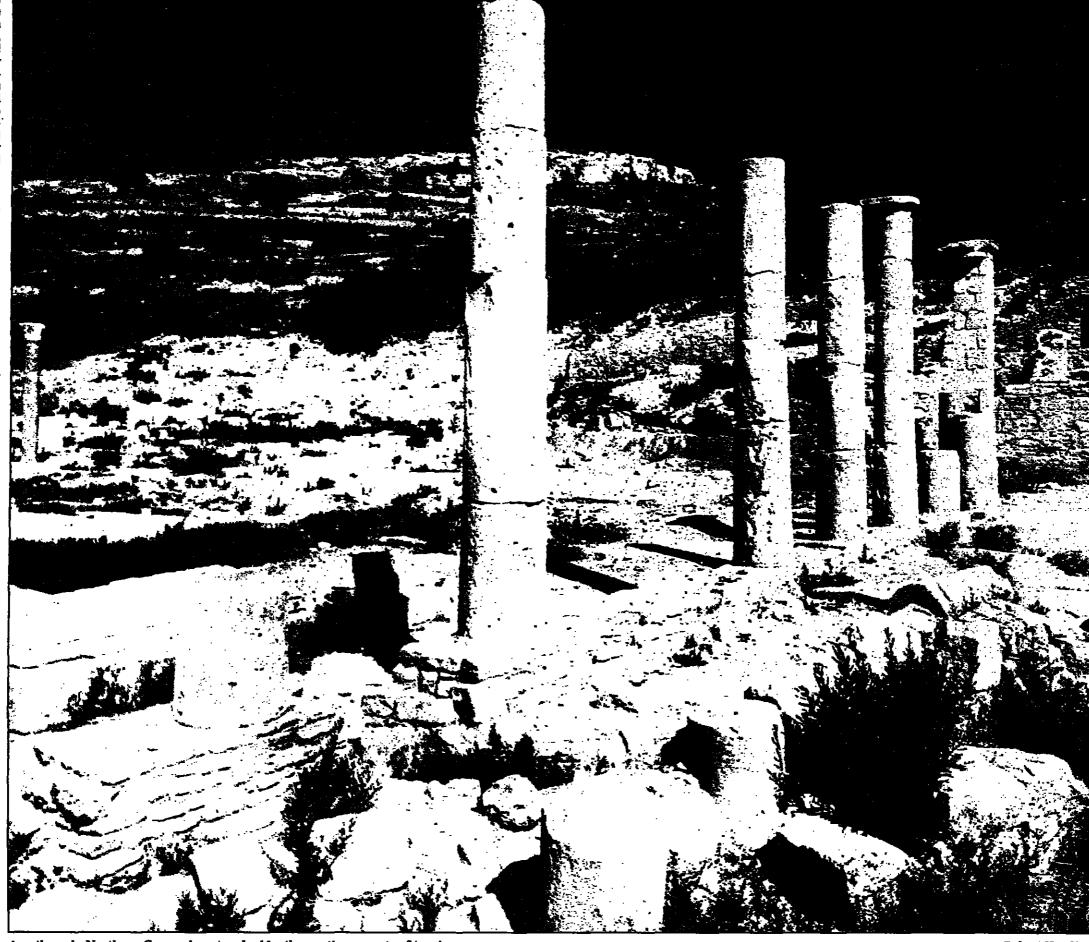
"1998 for me was the year I could both stand and sit in a Chinese bus. I spent three days in Chengdu. the capital of Sichuan province, using buses extensively. Normally I found a comfortable seat and if I did not, I could still stand without stooping although I am 6ft 5in. Prices may have gone up, from 4p to 7p in the last year but is any traveller likely to complain?

"1999 will be the year of indulgence for many travellers. From Moscow to Singapore. luxury hotels are slashing their prices to encourage tourists to take the place of the now bankrupt business travellers, Airlines, too, are tempting 'ordinary' tourists up front. Recessions are good news for travellers - take advantage of them whilst they last."

Neil Taylor of the specialist tour operator Regent Holidays

"My best discovery of 1998 was Turkish Cyprus. It is beautiful and both the people and the magnificent sites are untouched by the nastier aspects of tourism. The people are wonderfully trusting and all those

ancient places appear unmanaged. "My top tip for next year would be to visit Canada: in particular, go to Manitoulin Island on the Great Lakes. North American Indians make up one-third of the island's present population and the place takes its name from one of their great gods. It is the world's largest freshwater island and the perfect spot for water-based activities what's more, if you go in early August you



Amathous in Northern Cyprus is untouched by the nastier apsects of tourism

which Indian dancing groups from all over Ontario perform. Susan Griffith, editor of Work Your Way

Around the World'

"This year Watchdog put holiday building sites firmly on the agenda. Now tour companies are getting their acts together to let hotel they booked may be surrounded by JCBs, stone-cutters and drills. All the tour operators have to do is find those affected customers equivalent places to stay once they've admitted there are abroad and not in the UK." building works. Therein lies the rub. Some Helen O'Rahilly, editor of Watchdog' and tour companies will insist the customer pay

may catch the annual three-day festival at extra for a better-class hotel or else settle for a three-star instead of the (noisy) fourstar they originally wanted, and indeed,

booked up to a year in advance.
"Watchdog's tip for the traveller in 1999 is don't lose or have your passport stolen between leaving home and boarding the plane. Apart for the fact that you won't get on the flight, one Watchdog viewer found holidaymakers know in advance that the out the hard way that her travel insurance wouldn't pay back the price of her subsequently cancelled holiday. The way her travel insurance is underwritten assumes that the passport would be lost or stolen

'Weekend Watchdog'

"My travel discovery of 1998 is undoubtedly the Mani peninsula in Greece, because there you find a timeless, ancient world in

a modern setting. "1999 is my 25th anniversary of writing and publishing travel guides, so my tip has to be buy a good guide book and then find places the author doesn't know about that's the real adventure." Hülary Bradt. writer, tour leader and

"The best thing about 1998 was the improvement in agrotourism in Romania. Village homestay schemes became better organised and far more widely available. Since the revolution everyone's been say-

ing that the great things about Romania London to Berlin to see how Germany's are the people and the villages, 1998 is the year that they have finally got it together,

thank God! "1999 will be the year of Berlin. With the federal government moving in and the accompanying building scheme being implemented on a grand scale, Berlin'll be

Tim Burford, guidebook writer

"My discovery this year was Budapest, a fantastic city, full of atmosphere, and in a great situation with the river running

"My top trip for 1999 would be taking the

recently opened high-speed train link from

new capital is shaping up. And all this comfortably in a day." Brendan Fox, editor, Thomas Cook timetobles

1. 1.35

...

"My travel discovery of 1998 was San Pedro de Atacama in the Atacama desert in Chile. The desert scenery is spectacular and there is loads to do. It's not far from

the Valle de la Luna. "Remember in 1999 that a number of insurance policies don't cover travel in areas like Chile, for which the Foreign Office has issued an advisory warning against nonnecessary travel. Unscrupulous travel agents may not warn you that your travel

Our man in Havana (well, eventually...)

THE LAST time Cuba's national airline suffered a fatal accident was in August, on take-off from Quito in Ecuador. At the time, I explained that Cubana was the most dangerous airline for which reliable records exist - but reiterated my confidence in aviation safety standards by adding that I had bought a ticket on the airline to Havana for my Christmas holiday.

The good news: Tuesday's flight to Havana departed only three hours late and arrived safely. The bad news: a number of independent travellers who'd been hoping to spend the festive season in Cuba were not on board. Shortly before departure, we had our reservations cancelled by the airline.

A fortnight ago, the travel agent – Journey Latin America – called me to say that Cubana had cancelled all independent travellers' flight plans. Rather than repeat the sort of overbookings that have been revealed in these pages and on

the BBC's weekend Watchdog. the airline took a close look at its bookings over Christmas and decided to reduce the pressure on its planes.

did this was to ask the agent to confirm a batch of bookings, by issuing tickets and placing the ticket number in the reservations system. The airline claims that Journey Latin America failed to respond in time, and the reservations were

Cubana says that the way it

The agent provides evidence. in the form of print-outs from the Amadeus computer reservations system, that appears to show that bookings had been cancelled with no warning.

duly cancelled.

For the punter, perhaps the most maddening aspect is that because of a loophole in consumer protection legislation, neither the airline nor the agent has any liability beyond that of returning the cash paid (without

The lesson to be learnt from

this Christmas kerfuffle is that the paying customers who got the chop were those who had booked only a flight. In an age when travellers are finally getting the consumer protection they deserve, you might imagine that we grounded travellers are entitled to some compensation for having our Christmas plans

jeopardised. To avoid finding yourself in the same position as me, whenever you book a flight, book something else at the same time through the agent that sells you the ticket. This can be as modest as a single night at a hotel, or a day's car rental. Legally, this converts your air ticket into a

package - and instantly the provisions of the Package Travel Regulations come into effect. These give passengers redress if a holiday is cancelled shortly before departure. But if you have booked only a flight, then all you can do is hope that the agent will help you find some other way of getting to your destination.



SIMON CALDER

Christmas Eve in Havana? Instead, I was checking in at Heathrow at 4.35am

Even so close to Christmas, Journey Latin America somehow managed to find space on an alternative flight on the French airline Air Outre Mer. But it meant losing the first two days of the trip, then flying out in the small hours of 24 December and seven hours of hanging around at Orly airport in Paris to change

planes. If you happened to be checking in at Heathrow at 4.35am on Christmas Eve. I hope I wasn't too grumpy.

ON MONDAY morning, Britain's travel agents will begin in earnest the annual battle for the hearts and credit cards of holiday-makers.

In your local high street you can expect some good discount deals on summer 1999 holidays, without the old catch of having to buy overpriced insurance - the Government outlawed this technique last month. So take advantage of all the current competition between travel

agents, and shop around. One agency you won't find on the high street is Carlson Wagonlit, because it is a purely business travel agent. Six months ago, the company won the lucrative BBC account - and triggered an extraordinary amount of correspondence in the Beeb's in-house journal, Ariel.

"My cat could have come up

one hard-pressed staff member just part of the half-page tirade about Carlson Wagonlit in a recent issue. "I asked for a return flight, Heathrow to Amsterdam, leaving Wednesday, returning Thursday. They could pick times and flights." The company quoted £260; the prospective passenger found a

with a better offer," complains

took it. Another unhappy customer is the radio presenter (and contributor to these pages) Nicola Barranger. She had to travel to Vienna for an important interview, at a time when the Austrian capital was hosting a conference of 20,000 cardiologists. (And what should

fare of £70 elsewhere - and he

pulse? a Valentine?) "I headed for the Hotel Imperial where I had a ticket for a 2,300 schilling [about £115] room. The room was in keeping with the name of the hotel, but

the collective noun for such a

gathering be: a ventricle? a

when the butler appeared, I got worried. Yes, we did confirm with Carlson that you wanted the 23,000-schilling room, said young Heidi on the front desk. The room I was booked into at the licence-payer's expense cost a mere £1,115 a night - not including breakfast."

Ms Barranger managed to extricate herself from the Imperial and found an alternative that was a lot less likely to give licence-payers heart failure. "The full version of my Carlson Wagonlit cock-up I now reserve for dinner parties only," she says.

ST PETERSBURG has been voted the world's best party city by the staff of British Airways. In a survey in High Life magazine, the airline's employees rated it above Madrid, Dublin and New York. And the hottest venue in Russia's second city? The Valhalla bar, where customers are given free use of Viking tunics and helmets.



Cowboy culture is alive and well in the wide-open spaces of Wyoming (above); Antractica is least touched and fastest endangered by global warming (right); the great attractions of Romania are the people and the villages – such as Botiza in Maramuresh (below)

Robert Harding

insurance policy is invalidated if your destination is so designated. Check before you go that you are fully covered."

Chris Parrott, tour operator, Journey Latin America

"In 1998 I discovered that cowboy culture is alive and well in Wyoming. And then I also discovered that you should never ask a cowboy to take off his hat - his hair will almost inevitably be all flat and greasy underneath!

"In 1999 go to Cuba for fantastic music and architecture. The place is in a time warp and has a unique vitality. Sooner or later the US embargo is bound to be lifted and the danger is that Cuba will turn into just another Florida."

Lyn Hughes, editor of Wanderlust' magazine

"Global warming all over the world was one of the significant themes of 1998, so Antarctica was the place to go, because it is the location both the least touched and fastest endangered by that threat. This was a year that also saw a travel explosion on the Web, with companies like On-Line providing myriad different ways of accessing travel information.

"The places to go to in 1999 are all very strange. Go to Panama before the American flag comes down at the end of the year, or to Macao before it is handed back – also at the end of the year. For a taste of millennium fever South Pacific style, try Kiriati, although be warned that all the South Pacific islands have announced that they don't have the facilities to meet the anticipated influx of millennium travellers. I, on the other hand, intend to do all my travelling early in the year and to see in the mil-



lennium – bug and all – in a rare Christmas in Britain." Sarah Miller. editor of 'Condé Nast Traveller' manazine

"1998 saw the rediscovery of Croatia as a popular holiday destination. From nowhere, the Nelles Guide to Croatia and the Adriatic Coast suddenly began to sell in large quantities. 1999 will see an increasing trend for Croatia as a holiday destination and a number of new guides are due to come out then.

"On 11 August there will be a total eclipse of the sun and the place to go to see

this happen is Cornwall – if you can still find any accommodation. The must-have guides are The Royal Greenwich Observatories' Total Eclipse of the Sun, by Steve Bell, and the Yarner Press's Total Eclipse of the Sun in Cornwall and South Devon, by Pam Hine. Both are already proving very popular."

proving very popular. Andrew Steed, map buyer for Stanford's

"I suppose my best discovery of 1998 was Southern American food – grits, biscuits and gravy, barbecue, burritos. I'd only dabbled with it before.

"My tip for 1999 is go to the American South, especially Austin, Texas, the best city in America besides the big ones. It has a young population and there's always something going on in one of its 50 or more music venues. Between them these cater for everything from hard-core country & western to alternative punk. It's also a great base from which to see the South, or the Third Coast as they like to call it down there." Tim Perry, author of Rock & Roll Traveller UK and USA

"My favourite discovery of 1998 was the Postbus in Scotland. It was just a wonderful experience going into the lost and hidden places of Scotland and meeting en route the brilliant post-women who run post offices from their garden sheds. The service, which operates all over the UK, exists for those people living in areas where other forms of public transport aren't available.

"My travel tip for 1999 would be to take a look at the ever-expanding Tourism Concern website (www.gn.apc.org\tourismconcern). It contains a community tourism directory which highlights those places around the world where local



and, frequently, poor people are managing to own and to control their own tourism when they lack the facilities to market it themselves."

Patricia Barnett, Tourism Concern

"My discovery of 1998 was the Caprivi Strip in the north-east corner of Namibia. It used to be a no-go zone between Angola and South Africa. I travelled there by car from Namibia's capital, Windhook, drove down the strip itself and went south into Botswana. It was an expectation-plusone experience, and particularly great for a kindwatcher like trae.

for a birdwatcher like me.
"The trip for me in 1999 will be anoth-

er drive, this time from Australia's northern territories to its southern ones: from Darwin to Broome. It is a wonderfully wild drive which involves much planning. I shall be in search of the black grasswren, a bird found in western Australia." Keith Betton, the Association of British

"In 1998 STA's best travel discovery was Laos. We had always known it was an upand-coming destination, but this year its status was confirmed by a substantial increase in the number of bookings to go there. It is generally visited as part of a joint trip, along with Vietnam and Cambodia.

Travel Agents

"For 1999 we would recommend Africa as the destination for the young, independent traveller. Its Ivory Coast and, indeed, much of the west, is very unexplored and, on the east coast, the Bazaruto Islands off Mozambique are particularly beautiful." Down Howell, PR and promotions manager of STA Travel

"Sabaudia, a tiny town south of Rome, was my discovery of 1998 – a Fascist architecture holiday resort.

"My travel tip for 1999 is don't go to Sabaudia (I want to save it for myself)." Stephen Wood, skiing correspondent of "The Independent"

Will you jingle along with the euro in your pocket?

Europe's new currency is launched on Friday, but travellers - and the industry - are still less than sure how to react to it. By Simon Calder

"WE'RE NOT allowed to start selling them until the start of January," the helpful lady at Thomas Cook's head office told me when I tried to buy some euro travellers' cheques this week. "The trouble is, we won't know what they're worth."

That is the problem facing not just the foreign exchange industry, but the British travelling public in January. A survey for BBC2's Money Programme revealed that fewer than half of the respondents know what the single European currency is called. People within the travel industry are rather more clued up about the euro – but are still undecided about the benefits when it comes into being in 11 countries on Friday.

"It won't even occur to me to use the euro until it's really in full swing," says the travel photographer Geoffrey Roy. "I travel at too short notice to think much about the currency I use. I'll just go to the bank like I always do, order, say. £50 worth of French currency, and if they ask me whether I'd rather have euros than france, I'll probably say yes just for the fun of it. As for the old European coins, I'll take them to the bank where

they can be given to charity." Roy's change will be of value to him for at least the next three years. The euro that comes into effect on 1 January will be an intangible concept; notes and coins do not arrive for another three years. The 11 national currencies will be locked in to the rate, and therefore will be fixed against each other. Sterling will continue to float against the whole raft of currencies just as it does at the moment - but if the Deutschmark appreciates by 10 per cent against the pound, you

can be sure that everything else from the Irish punt to the Finnish markka has, too.

One way to hedge against an effective devaluation of Sterling is to purchase euro travellers' cheques - but you could just buy a consignment of French francs, or any other currency. The euro cheques could take a while to catch on when there is little perceived advantage. "I'll be avoiding the euro travellers' cheque," says Petra Shepherd, head of research for the cable and satellite station Travel Channel "For a start, I think they'll take a long time to catch on. More importantly, I think that travellers' cheques in emselves are redundant for travel today. Most people when they travel use a hole-in-the-wall card or credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard to get cash or to make payments. I'll wait to see



The euro: What is it worth?

what happens before I use the euro, but that's a personal thing - I always wait to see how everything goes and then I join the bandwagon."

Broadcaster Fi Glover, who reports for BBC2's Travel Show, believes that reluctance to

embrace the euro could be a
British thing. "I think it'll be
some time before the general
public trust the euro and begin
to think of it as a 'real' currency,"
she says. "Initially, the only
people who will use the euro in
any form will be business
travellers, and those who are
handed wads of cash by their
company before they travel so
that the choice of what currency
they use is not really their own."

But Chris Gill, author of Where to Ski, believes that the new currency will quickly take hold. "Everyone will use the euro: I don't think they'll be reluctant to do so. In French supermarkets they have given prices in euros as well as in francs for ages and I think that all the countries in Europe will take the full arrival of the euro in their stride. It'll make things easier for travellers."

At present, though, the Europhile traveller who sets off on 1 January with his wallet full of the new currency and his heart full of good intentions could be thwarted. On a journey though Europe, you could end up with the same uncomfortable mix of currencies as before. Yes, you can change your 50-euro travellers' cheque for 4,300 odd Belgian francs, but when you cross into Germany, shopkeepers will not be inclined to accept the Belgian currency in lieu of marks. By the time you arrive in Italy by way of Austria you'll be jingling like Santa from all the

small change.
The big change, believes
Martin Moore, a travel
guidebook publisher, will take
place in 2002. "Until then, I think
that the euro will gradually work
its way into general use, as
people, especially those who

travel frequently, slowly pick up
the currency on their travels."
Geoffrey Roy agrees that the
new currency will benefit
primarily the business
community. "The euro is very
much a trade thing. Business
will deal in euros and will be
greatly facilitated by a common
currency," he says. "For Joe
Public, on the other hand, it'll be
just one more confusing aspect
of travelling in Europe."

In a grieff of geoing, the

In a spirit of easing the confusion just a little. The Independent's travel desk has come up with a handy mnemonic to remember the 11 countries that are in the first wave:
BAFFLING SIP, standing for Belgium, Austria, France, Finland, Luxembourg, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Portugal. A bottle of Euro wine to the reader who comes up with the best alternative.

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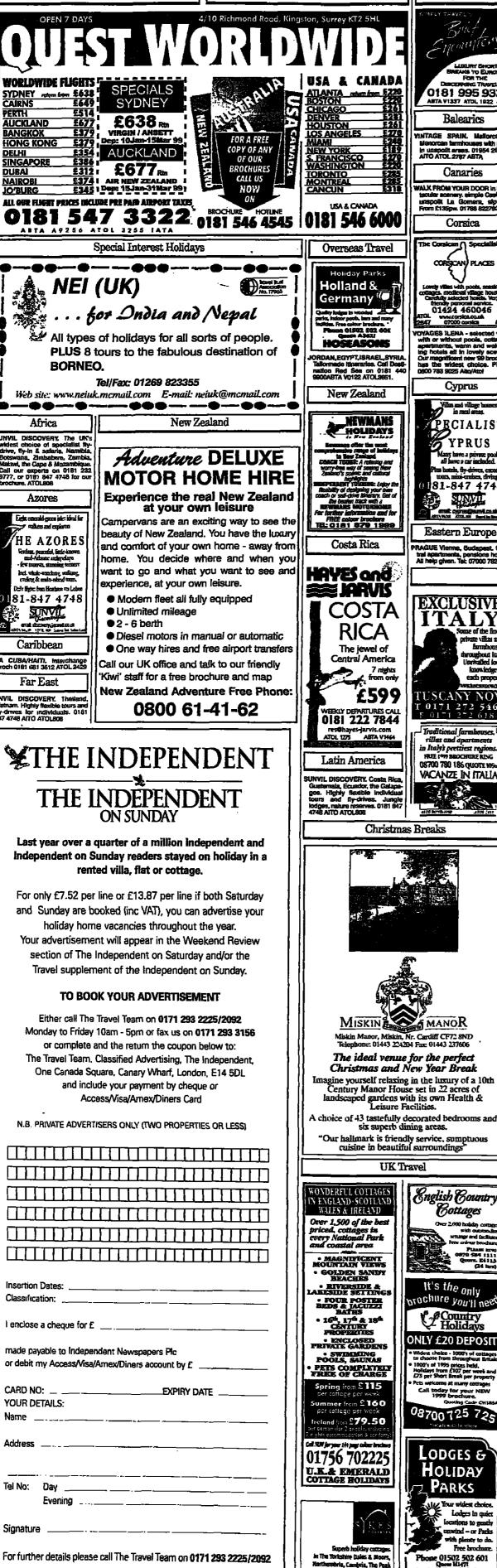
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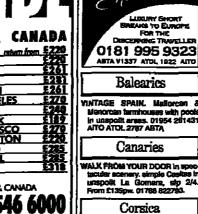
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Samoan enchanted evening

It was a blind date to remember. But that Saturday night on a South Pacific island was not what Cleo Paskal had expected



answer on the South Pacific island of Samoa. And it wasn't just the standardissue white sands and palm fringe... With a big grin, the Chief pulled

up his shirt, dropped his wraparound skirt and said: "This represents my devotion to my village." I stared, fascinated. He was cer-

sinly very devoted. A lacework of in-tricate blue-black patterns covered the Chief from mid-thigh to midchest. The famous Samoan tattoo. What I had asked to prompt this

Full Monte of Fealty was if traditional Samoan culture, known as the Fa'a Samoa, was still the main governing force in society. The answer was carved into the Chief's skin. He explained that, as a young

man, he went through a month's long, painful, ritual tattooing process to prove to his village that he was literally willing to endure whatever was necessary for the honour and privilege of serving them. They they then elected him as Matai, or

In Samoa, the Matai have complete control in the villages, or as my new, partially clothed, friend put it: "Whatever the Chief says goes. Whether it is right or wrong." They are lawyer, judge, jury, policeman, court reporter... you get the idea. They decide everything from how long you can grow your hair to when you pray. If you have a job that brings in cash, the money goes straight to the Matai, who redistributes it throughout the village ac-

cording to need. The laws are clear and strictly enforced. If a married man runs off with another woman, the wife's brothers get the nod from the Matai to go and "revenge". Assault a child and you'll probably soon be dead. There is practically no crime in

It all sounded a bit oppressive, if effective. But Samoa is, after all, in the South Pacific, a region renowned for being laid-back. I asked the Matai if he could suggest anything

must have been convinced because fun. "Ah," he said, with a slightly a large patio and at the far end was picked up the phone and set me up on a blind date.

I was to meet Tosi that night at Margreyta's show bar in the Samoan capital, Apia, It was Satur-

dodgy twinkle in his eye, "you must a huge stage. The set was made up meet my fourth son, Tosi." And he to look like a parody of a Polynesian Nights Spectacular, Palm tr waterfall, the works.

When I arrived, the show was in full swing. Tosi was up on stage fronting a live band. He had just day night, and Margreyta's was called up volunteers from the audipacked. Behind the club, there was ence and was teaching them some

dance moves. He himself looked spectacular in a floor-length evening gown, matching high heels and full make-uo.

The dance seemed to revolve around Tosi cooing the word "Banana" and the volunteers "shaking it to the front". The audience, some of them also in full drag, was in hysterics. A raucous good time was

pologist (and keen Abba fan) that I am, this led me to conclude that perhaos the Fa a Samoa isn't all harsh rules and strict discipline. I spent a pleasurable few hours dancing to faux-Hawaiian guitar music and picking up make-up tips. At the bar after the show, a glow-

being had by all. Amateur anthro-

ing and sweaty Tosi explained that, in Samoan terms, he was a fafafine, a boy-girl. He seemed a bit bemused at my curiosity and more keen on gossiping with his pals than answering my bland sociological questions. So, the next day, I arranged an ap-

pointment with the Samoan Minister for Women's Affairs, Foisaga Etevati Shon. I arrived at her office early, allowing me plenty of time to admire how well her male secretary had matched his red skirt and vermilion nail polish.

Minister Shon, a charming middle-aged woman who spent time working as a social worker in Utah. explained that: "In this culture there was never any stigma attached to effeminate boys. They are still fully in a floor-length evening gown.

accepted in the families. It's just not as big a deal as it is in many other

Effeminate boys here are still seen primarily as brothers or cousins or uncles. They are not a threat to the society, so the society accepts them. But I wondered if there was a limit. I asked Secretary Shon if that acceptance extended to people who were openly homosexual. She said: "Homosexuality is not condoned by our people." There it was. That firm limit to what the society was willing to accept.

It seems that, yes, there is some social flexibility in the Fa'a Samoa, but within very clear limits. The Matai accepted and was proud of his fafafine son, but had Tosi openly declared himself gay, it would have been a different matter.

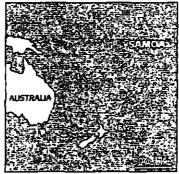
In a small country like Samoa, everyone knows the rules. Some are negotiable and others aren't. And the key to living peacefully is knowing which can be overtly broken and which can't. But the key to living happily is knowing how to look fabulous

FACT FILE

THE SENSIBLE airline to travel on is Air New Zealand (0181-741 2299), which serves Samoa as part of its South

Pacific network. You can include Samoa on an itinerary to New Zealand or Australia for less than £1,000 return, so long as you book through a discount agent and make sure you avoid peak periods.

Cleo Paskal is presenter of a new series called Small Worlds. which begins today on the BBC World Service. She has spent the past four years travelling to the microstates whose entire population is outnumbered by places like Crawley, in search of Utopia in places seemingly as diverse as Iceland and Kiribati. Monaco and the Maldives. The six-part series is broadcast on Saturdays at 1.30am, Tuesdays at 9.15am and Fridays at 3.15pm.



SOMETHING TO DECLARE

NEWS FROM THE TRAVEL WORLD

Trouble spots: how travel companies deal with passenger

behaviour is (in our opinion or that

Any Time Off customer whose

of any other person in authority) causing excessive distress, damage, danger or annoyance to anyone or anyone's property will (without notice or compensation) have their Time Off holiday arrangements cancelled and Time Off's responsibility for the "customer" ceases immediately. Full cancellation charges will apply. Many hotels still respect good manners - try not to show any frustration in public, as in nearly all cases of dissatisfaction a quiet word with the person in charge will see the problem on its way to being solved. Be patient - a friendly, nonconfrontational approach often goes Time Off city selection brochure.

If a passenger is upset, try to understand the psychology - they need reassurance, patience and a friendly face. They need someone to listen to their problem and, more importantly, to take action to resolve the problem. That is the only way to effectively calm people. It would be nice to stop an abusive,

shouting passenger, and to explain to them that you understand their problem. You know they are afraid of flying and that if they were to stop shouting you could make some progress with their problem. But in reality, this cannot be done. Just be nice to people. The result for you will be less stress, better job satisfaction and the thought that you made someone happy, and that you created a positive impression of Dubai international airport. 'Dubai Airport Cares' magazine

A yellow-card system has been introduced by British Airways to deal with the problem of air rage. From now on, if passengers become disruptive or smoke, they will be handed a letter warning them that if they persist in their behaviour. they will be liable for the cost of diverting the plane and their ticket will be invalidated for the return or 'High Life', BA's inflight magazine

Bargain of the week Cut-price Europe. As soon as the New Year travel peak is over, airlines face a slump in bookings. So expect some excellent deals in the first week of January from nofrills operators easyJet, Go and Ryanair. In a pre-emptive strike,



Statue of Christ, Rio de Janeiro

KLM UK (0990 074 074) is offering some absurdly good deals from its Stansted base to UK and European cities – with the added bonuses of inflight meals and the option of booking through any travel agent. Aberdeen, Amsterdam, Brussels. Paris, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle are each available for just £50 return, including all taxes. Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Milan and Rome come in at £70 return. You must book by midnight on 31 December, and travel by the end of February. At least two people must travel together to qualify.

True or faise? The travel bargain of the decade is dead? A bit of both. For five years, The Independent has urged readers to take advantage of the airpass deal that gives the freedom of Canada for a week for less than £200. Canadían Regional Airlines is terminating the deal from Friday. But a cut-price airpass on Horizon Air still allows unlimited travel in western Canada, as well as in the US as far south as Los Angeles and east to the Rockies; book through AirPass Sales (01737 555300). A one-

Another excellent way of jetting across or around North America is on Southwest (the world's safest airline). The company sells a "Freedom Air" ticket for specified flights. These must be bought in the UK, and even though the fares rise for 1999, they are usually much lower than buying in the US. The country is divided along a line through Houston and Kansas City; journeys to the east or west cost £69 (and allow a free connection if necessary), while a coast-to-coast trip costs £99. Book on 01293 596677. A free bonus: tokens exchangeable on board will get you four beers.

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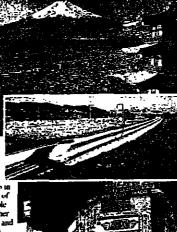
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Kiss your way around the world - and you could win a prize

Romance is the theme for the travel section's annual Christmas quiz. Whether you search the world looking for Mr or Ms Right, or have already found the ideal travelling companion, this is the only quiz with awards for ardour and romance

questions, and a tiebreak that asks the crucial question: where would you most like to be kissed? The six winners can look forward to a copy of Lonely Planet's Brief Encounters: Stories of Love, Sex and Travel. Send your answers on a plain (or, if you prefer, scented) piece of paper to: Kiss Chase, Travel Desk, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. The closing date is Friday 8 January (but in fact if your entry doesn't arrive until first post on Monday 11 January it'll be fine).

1. Men are from Mars, women are from Venus - but which of these locations is furthest from Eros in Piccadilly Circus? (a) Eros, Louisiana (b) Mars, Pennsylvania

(c) Venus Beach, South Australia 2. In which US location would the ageing popster Gary Puckett most appropriately find true love with a Young Girl?

(a) Union City, Tennessee (b) Union Grove, Illinois (c) Union Gap, Washington

3. "Chanson d'Amour" was recorded by which band? (a) New York Dolls (b) Manhattan Transfer

(c) Pasadena Roof Orchestra 4. Which of these is closest to Bethlehem?

(a) Virginia Water, Surrey (b) West Virginia, US (c) Virgin Islands, Caribbean

5. The latest hit from heart-throb

Alanis Morissette, "Thank U". includes the line "thank you India". But where is Ms Morissette from? (a) Mumbai (b) Milton Keynes

6. River deep, mountain high: one of these geographical features is a hill, while the other two are rivers. Name the summit:

(a) You, China (b) Pasion, Guatemala (c) Yes, England

(c) Montreal

7. In which South American country would a guy find Success, Paradise, Friendship

(a) Paraguay (b) Guyana (c) Uruguay

8. Which no-frills airline is commemorated in the original of Fairport Convention's 1969 hit, "Si Tu Dois Partir", and in the Moody Blues' first hit? (a) AB Airlines (b) Ryanair

9. And which is alluded to in one of Lionel Richie's drearier ballads? (a) Debonair

(b) Virgin Express (c) easyJet

10. Wedding is in Germany and Blessing is in Texas. So where is Font?

(a) Britain (b) Jordan

11. Which location is at the heart of the Amish community?

(a) Darling Down, Australia (b) Intercourse, Pennsylvania (c) Climax, Canada

13. Which French town: "If paradise was half as... (a) Nancy (b) Condom

(c) Nice

14. Which road is named in the song that provided the title for

Fairground

"First of a million kisses"?

in Victoria, Australia?

(a) Mt Beauty

(b) Mt Difficult

(c) Mt Adorable

(a) Petting Pond

(a) Lovers' Lane

(b) Lake Charm (c) Smooth River

17. Which one of these is made (a) Loving, New Mexico

Three places: (a) Hope, Derbyshire; (b) Desire, Louisiana; (c) Happy, Texas.

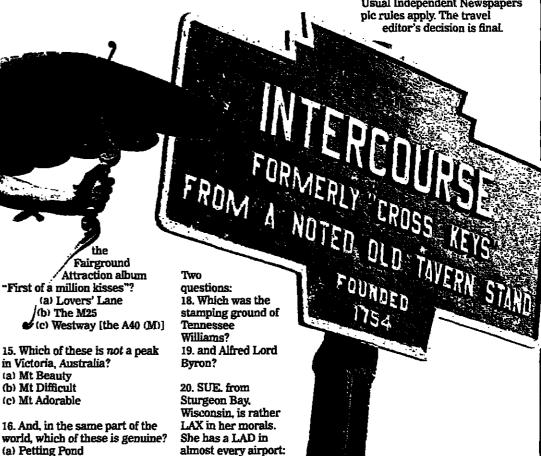
(b) Pretty Prairie, Kansas

(c) Raunchy, Nebraska

BUD in Hungary and JED in Saudi Arabia, DEL in India and DEN in Colorado, not to mention IAN, BOB and SYD. But if she wanted to journey from such SIN to find yet another MAN, which airline should she use?

Tie-break: complete the following in 12 words or fewer: The place where I would most like to be kissed is...

Usual Independent Newspapers pic rules apply. The travel



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NEW FILMS

THE APPLE (SIB) (PG)

Director: Samirah Makhmalbaf Starring: Massoumeh Naderi, Zahra Naderi

Seventeen-year-old Makhmalbaf's precocious début stages a recreation of the true-life fortunes of Iran's Naderi sisters, raised in seclusion by their parents before being set loose by a visiting social worker. From first to last, The Apple is tinged with a sense of wonder, steering a quiet course from one startling visual motif to the next. Part docu-drama, part rites-of-passage fable, this is a luminous missive from a burgeoning Iranian film scene.

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Director: Tony Scott

Limited Release

Starring: Will Smith, Gene Hackman Will Smith's fall-guy DA teams up with Gene Hackman's pensioned-off Pentagon warhorse, probes a political cover-up and gets embroiled in all manner of Big Brother-type trouble. Directed with his trademark gloss by Top Gun's Tony Scott. Enemy of the State comes on as The Conversation on steroids. A top-drawer cast (including Jon Voight, Ian Hart and Gabriel Byrne) weaves in and out of the hi-tech Countrywide imagery and adrenalised chase scenes. Countruwide

THE MIGHTY (PG)

Director: Peter Chelsom Starring: Sharon Stone, Gillian Anderson

Peter Chelsom's The Mighty treads through familiar coming-of-age country with its tale of two outcast kids (one fat, one sickly) in a storybook Cincinnati. Stolid and a tad predictable, though there's a elimmer of soul showing through. Sharon Stone and The X-Files' Gillian Anderson cope well in what basically amount to supporting roles. Countrywide

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15)

Director: Vincent Ward

Starring: Robin Williams, Annabella Sciorra Along comes Christmas, and out comes What Dreams May Come, the corn-fed love-child of It's a Wonderful Life and Ghost; this is an over-glazed turkey with all the trimmings. Williams perfects a lopsided simper as the dead chappie who leaves a cod-Impressionist heaven, to jet southward to rescue his suicide-bride (Sciorra) from a Gothic hell. Elephantine art-design runs rampant over the wispy plotline. The metaphysical conceits arrive with a heavy dusting of sugar

Xan Brooks

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE THREE BEST FILMS

Antz (PG)

Computer-animated comedy voiced by a stellar cast stars Woody Allen as a worker ant who becomes an unlikely opponent of the colony's totalitarian regime. Good fun, and Allen's best work in a while.



Slums of Beverly Hills (15)

Tamara Jenkins' feature début is a modest but winning rites-of-passage movie about a family coping with poverty in Los Angeles's richest suburb. Alan Arkin gives an acting masterclass as the dad.

ANTEONY OUINN

Out of Sight (15)

This tale of love on

opposite sides of the law

knocks spots off every

previous Elmore Leonard

adaptation, and boasts

in George Clooney and

Jennifer Lopez (left)

the swooniest romantic

pairing of the whole

cinematic year.

THE THREE BEST PLAYS

Love Upon the Throne Comedy Theatre

The Charles and Diana story (well, up to the divorce) presented by the National Theatre of Brent (all two of them, right). Very funny and oddly touching.

A Month in the Country Swan Theatre, Stratford A conjunction of two great artists and cultures. Ireland's finest living dramatist, Brian Friel, adapts Thrgeney's proto-Chekhovian comedy.

Hindle Wakes Royal Exchange, Manchester

Spectacularly refurbished after the 1996 bombing, this theatre bounces back in fine resilient form with the excellent production which had to be aborted then. To 9 Jan

GENERAL RELEASE

ANTZ (PG)

See The Independent Recommends, above.

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

In the follow-up to Babe. knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak animatronic fairytale, as the "sheep-pig" hits the city.

THE BOYS (18)

Out of jail after serving a sentence for grievous bodily harm, oldest "boy" Brett Sprague (David Wenham) moves back into his mum's drab suburban home, terrorises his girlfriend and turns his younger brothers into petty henchmen. The Boys spotlights the downside of life Down Under - it's potent, predatory stuff.

DANCING AT LUGHNASA (PG)

Less a dance, more of a trudge, this Ireland-set saga is given backbone by Meryl Streep's regal performance. The ever-watchable Michael Gambon is the homecoming brother. Kathy Burke, Catherine McCormack and Brid Brennan also feature.

ELIZABETH (15)

story of a female figurehead struggling to succeed This gaudy swashbuckler gallops full speed through in a male world.

THE EXORCIST (25TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE) (18)

seminal horror is still efficiently terrifying.

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)

Terry Gilliam's adaptation tilts at Ralph Steadman MY NAME IS JOE (15) cartoonery for its tale of a drug-fuelled journalistic Ken Loach's social-realist drama tells the tale of Joe assignment. The film soon descends into a carnival headed, pigeon-toed life.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U)

Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to Bandit Queen is the THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

19th-century California in the company of Antonio Banderas's authentically Hispanic do-gooder.

MULAN (I)

The Exorcist is a creature conditioned by rumour and Disney's animated feature has a pro-active heroine; hearsay. Pull it into the light, though, and Friedkin's a strong father/daughter relationship; honour and nobility; and, of course, cross-dressing. It's also one of Disney's most visually innovative movies.

(Peter Mullan), a recovering alcoholic. My Name is Joe of narcotic lunacy and the one stand-out is Johnny brilliantly spotlights the groping hopes and thwarted Depp - who brings Hunter S Thompson into bald- ambitions of a Britain caught below the poverty line.

> THE NEGOTIATOR (15) Samuel L Jackson and Kevin Spacey go head to head

A freshly restored print of Frank Capra's classic means in Gray's drama. The script has a predilection for audiences have a rare chance to appreciate the film's lunk-headed swearing that sounds uneasy in the fine black-and-white photography on the big screen. mouths of such articulate, rhetorical performers.

OUT OF SIGHT (15)

See The Independent Recommends, above.

THE PARENT TRAP (PG)

Disney re-heats its 1961 Hayley Mills heart-warmer into a spry, cross-cultural caper starring Lindsay Lohan as the separated-at-birth twin sisters determined to get their parents back together.

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY (U)

George Cukor's romantic comedy has a strange and melancholy heart and Katharine Hepburn's for the director of The Lost Seduction, but it is certainly unsatisfied heiress sheds real tears.

PLAYING GOD (18)

Glossy but garbled thriller about a junkie doctor RUSH HOUR (15) (David Duchovny) mixed up with a gang of Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker star in this hit-andcounterfeiters headed by a hammy Tim Hutton.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U)

In planning his cartoon life of Moses, DreamWorks SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS (15) honcho Jeffrey Katzenberg envisaged it "painted by See The Independent Recommends, above.

Claude Monet and photographed by David Lean". The end result winds up as The Ten Commandments by way of Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat.

John Frankenheimer's 40 years as a director lend an air of knackered resignation to this tired espionage thriller about a gang of mercenaries.

ROUNDERS (15) John Dahl's poker-club thriller is not a great comeback

an improvement on his last film, the eminently forgettable Unforgettable.

miss affair, which mixes Hong Kong action with an LA backdrop and a wisecracking black comic.

CINEMA COUNTRYWIDE

ABERDEEN

VIRGIN (0541-202050), Babe: Pig in the City (U): Mulan (U): Out of Sight (15): Blade (18): The Mighty (PG). What Dreams May Come (15): Enemy of the State (15); Rush Hour (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Antz (PG); Air Bud (U); The Mask of Zorro (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG)

PLAZA (01248-362059): Enemy of the State (15); The Mask of Zorro (PG): The Parent Trap (PG)

APOLLO ASTRA (01229-825354); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Rudyard Kipling's the Jungle Book (PG); Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Parent Trap (PG): The Mask of Zorro (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U); Saving Private Ryan (15): Energy of the ving Private Ryan (15); Enemy of the

BIRMINGHAM

MAC (0121-440 3838): The Exercist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Ever After (PG); Sons of the Desert (aka Fra-

ODEON (08705-050007): Rush Hour (15); The Parent Trap (PG); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Blade (18): The Prince of Egypt (U); Out of Sight (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U); What Dreams May Come (15); Enemy of the State (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Antz (PG)

BLACKBURN APOLLO 5 (01254-695979): Muppet Treasure Island (U); Blade (18); Jungle 2 Jungle (PG): The Truman Show (PG): What Dreams May Come (15): Enemy of the State (15): Rush Hour (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Antz (PG): Babe:
Pig in the City (U): The Mask of Zorro
(PG): Silding Doors (15): The Mighty
(PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Star Trek:

ABC CHURCH STREET (01253-24233):
ARIZ (PG); Enemy of the State (15);
What Dreams May Come (15); The
Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Babe:
Bas in the City (II) Pig in the City (U)

ODEON (08705-050007): The Parent Trap (PG): Mr Magoo (PG): Mulan (U): Godzilla (PG): Rush Hour (15): Enemy of the State (15): Paulie (U): The Mask of the State (15); Paulie (0); The mass of Zorro (PG); Babe: Pig in the City (U); Blade (18); Out of Sight (15); The Negotiator (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Antz (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U);

BOLDON COLLIERY

VIRGIN (0541-550512): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Antz (PG): The Mighty (PG): Small Soldiers (PG): The Prince of (PG): Small Soldiers (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): Out of Sight (15): Air Bud (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Blade (18): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Rush Hour (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Ronin (15): Enemy of the State (15): What Dreams May Come (15) May Come (15)

WARNER VILLAGE (01204-669988); The Mighty (PG): Mulan (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): Rush Hour (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): What Dreams May Come (15); Kudrat (NC); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Blade (18): Antz (PG): Small Soldiers (PG): Enemy of the State (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG)

SWITCH ISLAND LEISURE PARK (0151-525 2020); Godzilia (PG); What Dreams May Come (15); Out of Sight (15): The Prince of Egypt (U); Star Trek: Insur-rection (PG); Blade (18); Babe: Pig in the City (U): Ronin (15); The Mighty (PG); Antz (PG); Mulan (U); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Enemy of the State (15): The Parent Trap (PG); The Negotiator (15): There's Something About Mary (15): Dr Dollittle (PG): MouseHunt (PG): Rush Hour (15)

WARNER VILLAGE (0161-766 2440): Blade (18): The Mighry (PG): Enemy of the State (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Antz (PG); The Parent Trap (PG); Small Soldiers (PG): What Dreams May Come (15); Kudrat (NC): Mulan (U): Out of Sight (15); The Prince of Egypt (U): Babe: Pig in the City (U)

CHELTENHAM

ODEON (08705-050007); Dr Dolittle GLASGOW (PG): Antz (PG): What Dreams May Come (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Enemy of the State (15); Rush Hour (15); The Prince of Egypt (U): Saving Private Ryan (15); Bean (PG); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Out of Sight (15): Barney's Great Adventure

ODEON (01244-343216); Babe: Pig in the City (U): What Dreams May Come (15): Lost in Space (PG); The Parent Trap (PG); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Enemy of the State (15); Rush Hour (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insur-rection (PG); Antz (PG)

CLYDEBANK

UCI (0990-888990); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); My Name is Joe (15); What Dreams May Come (15); Rush Hour (15); The Parent Trap (PG): Rush Hour (15): The Parent Trap (PG): Ruch Kuch Hota Hai (PG): There's Something About Mary (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Out of Sight (15): The Negotiator (15): Air Bud (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007); The Prince of Egypt (U): Enemy of the State (15); What Dreams May Come (15); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Dr Dolittle (PG); Rush Hour (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Lost in Space (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Antz (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)

WARWICK ARTS CENTRE (01203-524524); The Gingerbread Man (15); The Horse Whisperer (PG); LA Confidential (18): Sliding Doors (15)

UCI 10 (0990-888990); Out of Sight (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Soldier (Asian Film) (NC); The Parent Trap (PG): Blade (18); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Small Soldiers (PG): Antz (PG); (15): Salian Joilders (PG): Antz (PG): Enemy of the State (15): Mulan (U): Rush Hour (15): Saving Private Ryan (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insur-rection (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007); Enemy of the State (15); The Parent Trap (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); The Mask of Zorro (PG);

WARNER VILLAGE (01302-371371); Enemy of the State (15); Antz (PG); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Rush Hour (15); Babe: PG in the City (U); The Mask Zorro (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U); Mandam of the United Decemes May Corne (15); Mulan (U); What Dreams May Come (15); The Parent Trap (PG); Small Soldiers (PG): Out of Sight (15)

ABC FILM CENTRE (0131-228 1638); The Parent Trap (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U); Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Antz (PG): What Dreams

ABC WESTER HAILES (0131-442 2200); Enemy of the State (15); Small Soldiers (PG); The Parent Trap (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): Blade (18); What Dreams May Come (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG): Babe: Plg in the Gty (U); Ronin (15); Out of Sight (15); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Rush Hour (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)

MORAY PLAYHOUSE (01343-542680): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig In the City (U); Dr Dolittle (PG)

GATESHEAD

UCI 11 METROCENTRE (0990-888990): Out of Sight (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Mulan (U); Antz (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U); Jhoole Bole Kauwa Kaate (NC); There's Something About Mary (15): What Dreams May Come (15): The Parent Trap (PG); The Negotiator (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Enemy of the State (15); Air Bud (U); Rush Hour (15): Blade (18): The Mask of Zorro (PG)

surrection (PG): Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): Antz (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): What Dreams May Come (15) HUDDERSFIELD

(U): Out of Sight (15)

ODEON (08705-050007); Rush Hour ODEON (08/05-05000/); Rush Hour (15); Antz (PG); Out of Sight (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U); The Mask of Zorro (PG); What Dreams May Come (15): The Parent Trap (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U); Blade (18): Mulan (U); Ronin (15); Enemy of the State (15)

(PG); Babe: Pig in the City (U); The Prince of Egypt (U); Doli Sajake Raktina (NC); The Mask of Zorro (PG): Mulan (U); En-emy of the State (15); Antz (PG)

EDEN COURT THEATRE (01463-234274); Mulan (U); Elizabeth (15) CALEDONIAN CINEMAS (01463-

Rush Hour (15): Small Soldiers (PG): Rush Hour (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Enemy of the State (15): What Dreams May Come (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U)

KILMARNOCK

the City (U); What Dreams May Come (15); Antz (PG); The Mask of Zono (PG); (13); Antz (10); The mean of 2010 (10); Small Soldiers (PG); The Negotiator (15); Enemy of the State (15); Out of Sight (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Rush Hour (15): The Parent Trap (PG): The

ABC (01524-64141); Babe: Pig in the City (U); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U); What Dreams May Come (15); Antz (PG)

Prince of Egypt (U): Out of Sight (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U); Antz (PG) HYDE PARK (0113-275 2045): It's a Wonderful Life (U)

ODEON (08705-050007); Babe: Pig in the City (U); The Mask of Zorro (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U): Enemy of the State (15); The Parent Trap (PG); Blade

CALEDONIAN GROSVENOR (0141-339 4298); The Secret of NIMH (U); Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): Enemy of the State (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Parent Trap (PG)

ABC (01422-352000): Star Trek: In-

UCI (0990-888990); Rush Hour (15); Antz (PG); The Parent Trap (PG); Babe: Pig in the City (U): Blade (18); What Dreams May Come (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Enemy of the State (15); Mulan (U); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); The Prince of Egypt (ID: Out of Sight (15)

UCI 8 ST ANDREWS QUAY (0990-888990);t (15); The Parent Trap (PG); Rush Hour (15); What Dreams May Come (15); Star Trek: Insurrection

233302): Small Soldiers (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Enemy of the State WARNER VILLAGE (01463-711147): The Parent Trap (PG): The Mask of Zor-ro (PG): Antz (PG): Small Soldiers (PG):

ABC (01563-525234); What Dreams

May Come (15): The Prince of Egypt (U):
Antz (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG):
Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig in
the City (U): The Parent Trap (PG) ODEON (08705-050007); Babe: Pig in

Prince of Egypt (U): Blade (18) LANCASTER

LEEDS ABC (0113-245 2665); Small Soldiers (PG); What Dreams May Come (15); The WARNER VILLAGE (0113-279 9855); Blade (18); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG);

The Parent Trap (PG): Antz (PG): Mulan (U): Rush Hour (15): Babe: Fig in the City (U): Out of Sight (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Small Soldiers (PG): What Dreams May Come (15): Enemy of the State (15): The Prince of Egypt (U) LIVERPOOL
ABC ALLERTON (0151-724 3550);

(15); Babe: Plg in the City (U)

ODEON (08705-050007): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): What Dreams May Come (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insur-rection (PG); Rush Hour (15); The Parent Trap (PG): Enemy of the State (15)

PLAZA (0151-474 4076): The Parent

Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Rush Hour

Trap (PG): Enemy of the State (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Twilight (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U); Cousin Bette (15): The Prince of Egypt (U) VIRGIN (0541-555146); What Dreams May Come (15); The Parent Trap (PG); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): Antz (PG); Out of Sight (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): The Mighty (PG); Rush Hour (15): Enemy of the State (15)

CORNERHOUSE (0161-200 1500); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerele Elizabeth (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18)

UCI TRAFFORD CENTRE (0870-6034557): Wajood (PG): The Mighty (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Exordst (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18): Jhoole Bole Kauwa Kaate (NC): Kudrat (NC): The Adventures of Robin Hood (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Pardeshi Babu (NC): Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG): There's Something About Mary (15): Savine Private Ruan About Mary (15): Saving Private Ryan (15): The Parent Trap (PG): Small Soi-(15): The Parent trap (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Mulan (U): Out of Sight (15): Rush Hour (15): What Dreams May Come (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): Dil To Paagal Hain (NC): Antz (PG); Lock, Stock & Tiwo Smoking Barrels (18): Blade (18): Elizabeth (15): Enemy of the State (15): The Negotiator (15)

MANSFIELD

ABC (01623-414146): Rush Hour (15):
Small Soldiers (PG): The Mask of Zorro (PG): What Dreams May Come (15):
Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Blade (18): Enemy of the State (15): Antz (PG):
Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): Out of Sight (15): Mulan (U): The Parent Trap (PG)

MONKSEATON ABC(0191-297 2121); Babe: Pig in the City (U): Antz (PG); What Dreams May Come (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
ODEON (08705-050007): Star Trek:
Insurrection (PG); The Mask of Zorro (PG);
The Prince of Egypt (U); The Parent Trap
(PG): Rush Hour (15): Enemy of the State
(15): Sabat Die in the City (I) (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U)

WARNER VILLAGE (0191-221 0222); Antz (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Rush Hour (15): Out of Sight (15): The Parent Trap (PG): Multiple (15): The Parent Trap (PG): Mulan (U): Ronin (15): What Dreams May Come (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Enemy of the State (15): Small Soldiers

NORTHAMPTON NORTHAMPTON
VIRGIN (0541 560564); Blade (18); Enemy of the State [15); Babe: Pig in the City (U): Rush Hour (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Out of Sight (15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Mehndl (PG); The Mighty (PG): Antz (PG): What Dreams May Come (15); The Parent Trap (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U)

NOTTINGHAM

ODEON (08705-050007); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); What Dreams May Come (15); Rush Hour (15); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Enemy of the State (15); Babe: Pig in the City (U); The Prince of Egypt (U); Blade (18); The Parent Trap (PG)

PRESTON
UCI 10 (0990-888990): The Mask of
Zorro (PG): What Dreams May Come
(15): The Soldier (Asian Film) (NC): Kuch
Kuch Hota Hai (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Rush Hour (15): Jhoole Bole Kauwa Kaate (NC); Antz (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Out of Sight (15): Mu-lan (U): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); Enemy of the State (15): The Prince of

WARNER VILLAGE (01772-881100);

The Mask of Zorro (PG); Star Trek; In-

surrection (PG); Out of Sight (15): Rush

Egypt (U)

Hour (15): What Dreams May Come (15): Small Soldiers (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Enemy of the State (15): Antz (PG): Mulan (U): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG) APOLLO 5 CINEMA (01745-353856): What Dreams May Come (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Rpsh Hour (15): 101 Dalmatians

(U); Babe: Pig in the City (U); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); The Mask of Zorro

(PG): Enemy of the State (15); Men with Guns (Hombres Armados) (15) ROCHDALE ABC (01706-719933); Star Trek: In-Surrection (PG): Rush Hour (15): Small Soldiers (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Enemy of the State (15): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Antz (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Ronin (15): What Dreams May Come (15): Mulan (U): Blade (18): Our of Sizhe (15):

Blade (18): Out of Sight (15) SALFORD QUAYS VIRGIN CINEMA (0541-555157): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Out of Sight (15): Rush Hour (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Blade (18): Enemy of the State (15): Antz (PG): The Mighty (PG): What Dreams May Come (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U)

UCI CRYSTAL PEAKS 10 (0990-888990): Mendhi (PG); Rush Hour (15); Small Soldiers (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Antz (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): Out of Sight (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Saving Private Ryan (15): What Dreams May Come (15): Enemy of the State (15): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Mulan (U): Blade (18) WARNER VILLAGE (0114-256 9222):

WARNER VILLAGE (0114-256 9222);
Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Mighty (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Mulan (U): Blade (18): What Dreams May Come (15): Enemy of the State (15): Antz (PG): Small Soldiers (PG); Rush Hour (15): The Parent Trap SHIPLEY APOLLO UNIT FOUR (01274-583429); The Parent Trap (PG); Antz (PG); Enemy of the State (15); The Prince of Egypt (U); The Magic Sword: Quest for

nelot (U): A Thousand Acres (15)

UCI 8 (0990-888990); Star Trek: In-surrection (PG); What Dreams May Come (15); Rush Hour (15); The Prince of Fight (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Blade (18): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Out of Sight (15): Saving Private Ryan (15): Enemy of the State (15); Mulan (U): Antz (PG): Small Soldiers (PG)

ABC (01704-530627); Antz (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U); What Dreams May Come (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U) PLEASURE ISLAND (01253-781381); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U); The Parent Trap (PG); Babe:

Pig in the City (U)

TAMWORTH UCI 10 (0990-888990); Star Trek: In-

Out of Sight (15); What Dreams May Come (15); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Mulan (U): Blade (18): Saving Private Ryan (15): Small Soldiers (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U): Doll Sajake Rakhna (NC) TELFORD UCI 10 (0990-888990): Small Soldiers (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): Out of Sight (15); Mulan (U); Enemy of the State (15); What Dreams May Come (15): Doli Sajake Rakhna (NC); Star Trek;

surrection (PG); Antz (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Parent Trap (PG): Enemy of the State (15); Rush Hour (15):

Egypt (U); Blade (18); Rush Hour (15) WAKEFIELD CINEWORLD THE MOVIES (01924-332230): Armageddon (12); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Mulan (U); Mudrat (NC); What Dreams May Come (15); Blade (18); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); The

Prince of Egypt (U): Babe: Pig in the City (U): There's Something About Mary (15): Enemy of the State (15): Rush Hour (15): Out of Sight (15): The Big Sleep (15): Naseeb (PG): The Parent Trap (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)

REGENT (01235-767878); The Parent

Trap (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG):

my of the State (15): Babe: Pig in

the City (U); The Negotiator (15) WARRINGTON UCI 10 WESTBROOK (0990-888990); Enemy of the State (15); What Dreams May Come (15); Out of Sight (15); Babe: Pig in the Ciry (U); Mulan (U); The Par-ent Trap (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): The Prince of Egypt (U); Rush Hour (15); There's Something About Mary (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Blade (18); Antz (PG); The Soldler (Asian Film) (NC)

ODEON (08705-050007); Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Parent Trap (PG): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U): Enemy of the State (15): Emma (U) WARNER VILLAGE (01904-691094): The Mask of Zorro (PG): Enemy of the State (15): Antz (PG): The Mighty (PG): Out of Sight (15): Star Trek: Insurrection (PG): What Dreams May Come (15): Mulan (U): Rush Hour (15): Small Soldiers (PG): Blade (18): The Parent Trap (PG): Babe: Pig in the City (U): The Prince of Egypt (U)

CINEMA REPERTORY

OUEEN'S FILM THEATRE (01232-244857) Point Blank (18) Sat 10pm; al-so Sun 9pm, Mon, Tue, Thur 9.15pm. Wed 2.30pm. 9.15pm A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries (15) Fri 6.45pm, 9.10pm Kolya (12) Fri 7pm Cube (15) Fn 9.15pm

BIRMINGHAM ELECTRIC (0121-643 7277) Rebecça (PG) Sun-Thur 2pm + The Birds 4.25pm Still Crazy (15) Sun-Thur 2.50pm, 6.50pm The Truman Show (PG) Sun-Thur 4.45pm, 8.45pm The Kingdom (Parts 1 & 2) (15) Sun-Thur 6.45pm La Vie de Jésus (NC) Fri 3pm, 7pm The Negotiator (15) Fri 3.35pm, 6.15pm, 9pm Elizabeth (15) Fri 4.45pm, 8.45pm

BRADFORD NMPFT (PICTUREVILLE) (01274-NMPFT [PICTUREVILLE] (01274-732277) Sons of the Desert & Helpmates (U) Sun 3.45pm; also Mon 1.45pm A Matter of Life and Death (PG) Sun 5.30pm; also Mon 8.15pm The Bollywood Movie (NC) Sun 7.30pm A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries (15) Mon. Wed 3.30pm; also Tue Bpm It's a Wonderful Life (U) Mon. Wed 6pm; also Tue 3.45pm, Thur 1pm Lost in Space (PG) Tue 1.30pm; also Wed 1pm The Truman Show (PG) Tue 6pm; also Wed 8.15pm

COVENTRY
WARWICK ARTS CENTRE (01203-WARWICK ARTS CENTRE (01203-524524) LA Confidential (18) Sat 4pm: also Sun 7.30pm Sliding Doors (15) Sat 7.30pm; also Sun 4pm The Horse Whis-perer (PG) Mon, Wed 4pm; also Tue 7.30pm The Gingerbread Man (15) Mon, Wed 7.30pm; also Tue 4pm

IRISH FILM CENTRE (00 353 1-679 3477/5744) Enter the Dragon (18) Sun. Mon 2.10pm, 6.30pm Year of the Horse (15) Sun-Thur 2.10pm, 6.30pm The Governess (15) Sun-Wed 4.10pm. 8.30pm: also Thur 4.10pm On Connait la Chanson (PG) Sun-Wed 4.20pm. Insurrection (PG): Antz (PG): Saving Private Ryan (15): The Mask of Zorro (PG); The Parent Trap (PG): The Prince of 8.40pm; also Thur 3pm, 6.10pm Full Met-al Jacket (18) Tue, Wed 2.10pm, 6.30pm

EDINBURGH FILMHOUSE (0131-228 2688) Henry Fool (18) Sat 2pm, 5.40pm,8.30pm; also Sun 5.40pm, 8.30pm, Mon-Wed 8.30pm; also Sun 5.40pm, 8.30pm; Mon-Wed 8.30pm; also Mon-Wed 8.35pm also Mon-Wed 8.35pm Mandragora (NC) Sat. Sun 3pm Dancing at Lughnasa (PG) Sat. Sun, Fri 6pm, 8.45pm; also Mon 8.45pm; Tue, Wed 3.30pm, 8.45pm The Truman Strong PGG Sat. Sun, Fri 6 pm, 8.45pm Manuel 6 See. Show (PG) Sat, Sun 6.10pm Mary of Scot (Stand (PG) Sun, Mon 2pm Harnam: The Turkish Bath (NC) Mon. Tue 2.30pm. 6.30pm; also Wed 6.30pm The Fountainhead (PG) Mon 3,30pm, 6.15pm; also Tue, Wed 6.15pm East Side Story (U) Mon 6pm; also Tue, Wed 3pm, 6pm Sitcom (NC) Fri 2,30pm, 6,30pm, 8,30pm

The Elementary School (18) Fri 3.30pm

THE LUMIERE (0131-247 4219) Paws

(PG) Sat 10.30am Anastasia (U) Sat 1pm; also Sun 2.30pm Loch Ness (PG) Sat

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3.30pm; also Sun 12noon + Short: A Small Deposit Rob Roy (15) Sat 6pm Whisky Galore (U)/Sweet Smell of Success (PG) Sat 8.30pm Bells Are Ringing (U) Sun 5.30pm Mrs Brown (PG) Sun 8.30pm + FILM THEATRE (0141-332 8128) A Toute Vitesse (15) Sun 2pm Henry Fool (18) Sun. Wed 3pm. 8pm: also Mon. Tue 1pm. 6pm Rien Ne Va Plus (15) Sun. Wed

5.45pm; also Mon, Tue 3.45pm, 8.45pm The Boys (18) Sun 6.15pm, 8.30pm; also Mon, Wed 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm The Ride (15) Tue 6.15pm MANCHESTER MANCHES I EX CORNERHOUSE (0161-200 1500) The Ex-orcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18) Mon 5.25pm. 8.05pm: also Tue. Wed 2.05pm. 5.25pm. 8.05pm Elizabeth (15)

Loathing in Las Vegas (18) Mon 6.10pm. 8.40pm; also Tue, Wed 2pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
TYNESIDE (0191-232 8289) The Land
Girls (12) Sun 1pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm; also Mon 6.15pm, Tue 4pm, 6.15pm, Wed
4pm, 8.30pm Ever After (PG) Sun
3.455m4-345m4-3.25pm, 2.30pm Sun 1.30pm 4pm. 8.30pm Ever After (PG) Sun 3.45pm; also Mon 3.45pm, 8.30pm Snake Eyes (15) Sun, Mon 4pm, 8.15pm; also Tue 6pm, Wed 3.45pm, 8.15pm Hamam; The Turkish Bath (NC) Sun, Mon 6pm; al-so Tue 3.45pm. 8.15pm. Wed 6.15pm Ridicule (15) Tue 8.30pm; also Wed 6pm

Mon 5.45pm, 8.20pm; also Tue, Wed 2.05pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm Fear and

NOTTINGHA<u>M</u>

SHEFFIELD

BROADWAY (0115-952 6611) Character (15) Sun 3.30pm Elizabeth (15) Sun 3.30pm; also Mon-Wed 6pm, 8.30pm Modulations (NC) Sun 6pm Dancing at Lughnasa (PG) Sun 8.30pm; also Mon-Wed 6pm, 8.30pm

THE SHOWROOM (0114-275 7727) Mulan (U) Sun 2pm; also Mon-Wed

2pm, 4pm Lord of the Rings (PG) Sun-2pm. 4pm Lord of the Rings (PG) Sun-Wed 2.15pm The Singing Ringing Tree (U) Sun-Wed 2.30pm The Third Man (PG) Sun 3pm The Mighty (PG) Sun 4pm. 6.10pm, 8.20pm; also Mon-Wed 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm Elizabeth (15) Sun, Tue 5.10pm; also Mon, Wed 8pm Dancing at Lughnasa (PG) Sun 6.15pm, 8.20pm; also Mon-Wed 6.45pm, 8.50pm My Name is Jee (15) Sun 6.30pm, 8.45pm; also Mon-Wed 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm It's a Worderful Life (U) Sun, Tue 7,45pm; also Mon, Wed (U) Sun. Tue 7.45pm; also Mon. Wed

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NOTTINGHAM

ABC (0115-947 5260); Antz (PG); The Prince of Egypt (U): Small Soldiers (PG); Out of Sight (15); What Dreams May Come (15); Babe: Plg in the City (U):

Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)

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ABERDEEN HIS MAJESTY'S Peter Pan Sonia stars in JM Barrie's delightful tale. 26, 28-30 Dec, 7pm, 26, 28-31 Dec, 1 45pm, 27 Dec, 3pm, ends 3 Jan, 510-514, concs available. Rosemount Viaduct (01224-641122)

BIRMINGHAM

ALEXANDRA THEATRE A Tale of Two Cities Paul Nicholas stars in this new musical adaptation of the Charles Dickens novel. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mats Wed, Thur & Sat 2.30pm, no perf 31 Dec. ends 16 Jan. £7-£24.50, Suffolk Street

BIRMINGHAM REP A Christmas Carol Michael Bogdanov directs a new adaptation of Charles Dickens Victorian tale of greed and redemp-tion. 31 Dec. 10,30am, 26, 28-31 Dec. 2.30pm. 26. 28-30. 1 Jan. 7.15pm. ends 16 Jan. £7.25-£19. concs available. Broad Street (0121-

THE DOOR - BIRMINGHAM REP THE DOOR - ENGINEERS TWO Weddings and a Funeral Stage version of a Bollywood blockbuster. 26, 28-30 Dec, 2, 5-9 Jan. 7, 45pm. E9. concs £7. Broad Street (0121-236

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GRAND THEATRE Aladdin Magical family panto starring Wayne Sleep. 26-31 Dec. 2pm, 26-30 Dec. 7pm, ends 10 Jan. £6-£13.50, concs available. Church Street (01253-

BRIDLINGTON SPA PAVILION Cinderella Family pantomime starring Paul Valentine rom TV's Knightmare as Buttons. 26-30 Dec. 1 & 2 Jan, 2.30pm, 26 & 28 Dec., 2 Jan., 7pm., 3 Jan., 2pm & 6pm. E5.50-E6 50, concs available. South Marine Drive (01262-678258)

BUXTON OPERA HOUSE Jack and the Beanstalk Join Jack as he climbs the giant beanstalk in search of happiness and pols and pols of gold. 26, 30 Dec. 2pm, 26, 30 Dec. 6.30pm, 29, 31 Dec. 1-2 Jan. 2.30pm, £5.50-£11.50, child £4.50-£8.50 Water Street (01298-72190)

GATEWAY THEATRE Alice's Adrentures in Wonderland Join Alice in her journey down a rabbit hole to a wild and wacky world. 26, 28-31 Dec. 2.15pm. 26, 28-30 Dec. 7pm. ends 16 Jan. £11.50, child £6.50, concs available. Hamilton Place (01244-340392)

CHIPPING NORTON CHIPPING NORTON THEATRE ALI

Baba and the 40 Thieves Panto tak-en from the Arabian Nights. 26, 31 Dec. 2pm. 26, 28-30 Dec. 1 Jan. 4.30pm, 31 Dec. 5pm, 26, 28-30 Dec. 1 Jan. 7.30pm, ends 16 Jan E7.75-£14.75. Spring Street (01608-6423501

WARWICK ARTS CENTRE Sinbad oin Sinbad and Princess Jasmine on an exciting and romantic voyage across the Arabian Seas. 26-30 Dec. 2 Jan, 2.30pm. 26-30 Dec. 2 Jan. 7.30pm. £8-£10, concs available. Globet Hill Road (01203-524524)

DERBY PLAYHOUSE Babes in the Wood Join Robin Hood and his mer-ry men in the search for the lost Sales in the wood and many marian, 28-31 Dec, 1 Jan, 2pm, 28-31 Dec, 1 Jan, 7.15pm ends 23 Jan, £9-£14.50, concs £6-£9.50. Theatre Walk (01332-363275)

FDINBURGH KING'S THEATRE The Adventures of Aladdin The magical experience of panto for all the family starring David Rintoul, Allan Stewart and Ger-David Rumbul, Ausar Stewart and Ger-ard Kelly. 26, 29–31 Dec, 2pm. 26, 29-30 Dec, 7pm, 27 Dec, 1pm. 27 Dec, 5.15pm, ends Jan 17, £7.50-£14,50, concs available. Leven Street (0131-529 6000)

ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE The Snow Queen Stuart Palerson's charming adaptation of Anderson's fairy tale. 26, 28-31 Dec., 2.30pm, 26, 28-30 Dec., 7pm, ends 9 Jan. £4-£15, concs available. Grindlay Street (0131-229 9697)

GLASGOW CITIZENS THEATRE Merlin the Magnificent Wizardry and evil forces combine in an enchanting new Christmas show. 26 Dec. 2pm. 5pm. 8pm. £2.50-£10, concs available. Gorbals Street (0141-429 0022)

KING'S THEATRE Sleeping Beauty Elaine C Smith stars in this magical fairy-tale production. Mon-Sar 7pm. no per/ 1 Jan. 26, 28-30 Dec. 2pm. 31 Dec. 1pm, ends 16 Jan. £2.50-£15, concs available. Bath Street (0141-287 5511)

PAVILION THEATRE Pinocchio The Krankies and Jimmy Cricket deliv-er a magical panto treat. 26 & 27 Dec, 2pm, 27 Dec, 6.30pm, 26, 28-30 Dec, 7.30pm, 28-30 Dec, 1.30pm, ends 23 Jan, £6-£9.50, concs available, Renfield Street (0141-332 1846)

HALIFAX VICTORIA THEATRE Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs Family pan-tomine with stars from TV's Glad-iators, Emmerdale and Last of the Summer Wine. 26-30 Dec. 1-3 Jan. 2pm, 26 & 27 Dec. 1 Jan. 6pm, 28-29 Dec, 2 Jan. 7pm. £5.95-£10.50, concs available. Wards End (01422-

HULL TRUCK THEATRE Gold! Hull Truck's story of five college friends who re-unite in an atternot to recre ale their student days. Mon-Sa 8pm. (31 Dec. 6pm), ends 16 Jan. £5.50-£10, concs available. Spring Street (01482-323638)

NEW_THEATRE Aladdin_Bl: from On the Buses stars with Kathy Staff. 26, 28-31 Dec. 1 Jan. 2pm, 26, 28-30 Dec. 1 Jan. 7pm, ends 23 Jan. £9.50-£13.50, concs available. Kingston Square (01482-226655)

GRAND THEATRE Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical version of the Bible story. 26 Dec., 2pm, 5pm, 8pm, 27-31 Dec., 1 Jan, 2.30pm & 7.30pm, ends 3 Jan. £8.50-£22. New Briggate,

CIVIC THEATRE Robinson Crusoe Popular panto with the usual ingre-dients of glamour, cornedy, songs and audience participation. 26-27. 31 Dec, 3pm, 28-30 Dec, 2pm & 7pm, ends 9 Jan. £6-£7, child £5-£6. Cookridge Street (0113-247 6962/245 5505)

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: THEATRE ROYAL Dick Whittington COURTYARD THEATRE Present Laughter Ian McKellen plays tem-Spectacular pantomime starring Lesley Joseph, John Nettles, Jeffrey Holland and Hillary Minster. 26, 28-30 Dec. 2pm & 7pm. 27 Dec. mental actor Gary Essent peramental actor Gary Essentime in Noel Coward's witty comedy about theatrical life. 28, 30 Dec. 1 Jan. 7.45pm. 31 Dec. 2.30pm, ends 22 Jan. E8-£17, concs £5 50-£14.50. The Nutcracker Holfman's Iale of the 1.30pm & 5pm, 31 Dec, 10am, ends atro Square (0115-989 5555) Sugar Phum Fairy, 26 & 28 Dec., 7pm. 29 & 30 Dec., 10am., 28, 29, 30 Dec., 1,30pm., ends 23 Jan., £5,50-£17. CRUCIBLE THEATRE South Pacif-

Street (0114-276 9922)

Street (0114-276 9922)

(01789-295623)

(01904-671818)

(01904-62356R)

concs £6.50.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

LYCEUM THEATRE Jack And The

28-30 Dec. 1 Jan, 2pm & 7pm, ends 17 Jan. £6.50-£14.50. Norfolk

Country Brian Friel's adaptation of

sexual desire. Michael Attenbo

ough directs. 26, 28-29, 31 Dec

Jan. 7.30pm, ends 20 Feb. £5-£30.

depiction of the human spirit

undermined by bloody warfare. 30 Dec. 7.30pm. 31 Dec. 1.30pm. ends 20 Feb. £5-£30. Waterside

GRAND OPERA HOUSE Jack And

THEATRE

WEST END

CINDERELLA Angela Carter's ver-

sion of this fairytale is staged by the acclaimed Improbable Theatre, Lyric

Hammersmith King Street, W6 (0181-741 2311) → Hammersmith.

phone for times, ends 9 Jan, £5-£18,

JESUS, MY BOY Tom Conti stars

in John Dowie's alternative Christmas show. Apollo Shaftesbury Avenue. W1 (0171-494 5070) ← Picc Circ. Phone for times £5.50-£18.50.

THE SNOWMAN Award-

winning production of Raymond

Briggs' contemporary classic. Sadler's Wells At The Peacock Por-

tugal Street. WC2 (0171-863 8222) © Holborn. Phone for times, ends

Turgeney's portrait of all-con

Troitus And Cressida Shaki

Playhouse Square (0113-213 7700) WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: OUARRY THEATRE Martin Guerre Boubil and Schonberg's musical love story. 26, 28-30 Dec. 7.30pm. 29 & 31 Dec. 2pm, ends 13 Feb. £8-£24, concs £8-£18.50. Playhouse square (0113-213 7700)

EVERYMAN THEATRE Jumpin' Jack Flash Rock wroll panto. 28-30 Dec. 7.30pm, 28-31 Dec. 2.30pm, ends 30 Jan. £5.95-£11.95. Hope Street (0151-709 4776)

NEPTUNE THEATRE Peter Pan Former Gladiator Eunice flies in to save the Lost Boys from the schem-ing Captain Rook, played by come-dian Leslie Gibson. 26-31 Dec. 2pm, 27-30 Dec. 7pm, ends 10 Jan. £7-£10, concs. £5-£8. Hanover Street 10151-709 7860 (0151-709 7844)

LIBRARY THEATRE Puss in Boots Adventure story about a young man who leaves home in search of fame and fortune, accompanied by his exceptionally clever cat Puss. 31 Dec. 2.30pm. 26 & 27 Dec. 3pm. 26-30 Dec. 7pm. ends 16 Jan. E8-£15, concs available, Central Library St Peter's Square (0161-236 7110)

OPERA HOUSE Oliver! Gary Wilmot stars in Lionel Bart's Dickensian mu-sical. 26, 28 Dec-1 Jan. 7.30, 26 & 30 Dec. 2.30pm. ends 30 Jan. £10-£29. Quay Street (0161-242 2503) PALACE THEATRE Cinderella Jim

Davidson directs a family panto, starring Darren Day and Ruth Madoc. 27 Dec. 1pm, 26, 28-30 Dec. 1 Jan. 2.30pm, 26, 28-30 Dec. Jan l. 7.30pm. ends 24 Jan. £7.50-Street (0161-242 2525) **ROYAL EXCHANGE THEATRE Hin-**

die Wakes The Royal Exchange re-opens with the production which was cut short by the bomb blast in 1996. 26 Dec. 8pm, 28 Dec-1 Jan. 7.30pm, 26, 28 Dec. 4pm, ends 9 Jan. £7-£23, concs available. St Anne's Square (0161-833 9833)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NEWCASTLE PLAYHOUSE The Princess And The Goblin The gob lins attempt to take over the world in this magical Christmas show 26-31 Dec, 2pm, 26, 28-30 Dec, 7pm, ends 9 Jan, £10.75-£12.75, concs avail-able. Barras Bridge (0191-230 5151)

THEATRE ROYAL Cinderella Pop ne with stars from TV's Coronation Street and Eastenders. 26 Dec & 1 Jan, 3.30pm, 28-31 Dec, 2pm, 26. 28-31 Dec. 1 Jan, 7pm, ends 23 Jan, E5-E15, concs available. Grey Street (0191-232 2061)

NOTT!NGHAM PLAYHOUSE Jack And The Beanstalk Kenneth Alan Taylor writes and directs his fifteenth consecutive panlomime for Nottingham Playhouse. 28-31 Dec. 2.30pm & 7.30pm, 1 Jan, 7.30pm, ends 23 Jan. £9-£12, child £5-£8. East Circus Street (0115-941 9419) Jan 30, £7,50-£32,50

EXHIBITIONS

BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY Burne-Jones Important work by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Mon-Thur, Sat 10am-5pm, Fri 10.30am-5pm, Sun 12.30pm-5pm (phone for Christmas opening), ends 17 Jan. 25, 23 50 concs. £14 family. Chambet Lin. Sun 20. c Banish the winter blues with a vis-to this heartwarming Rodgers and family. Chamberlain Square (0121-303 2834) Hammerstein musical. 26-27, 29-30 Dec. Jan 1, 2,30pm, 26-28, 29-30 Dec. Jan 1, 7,30pm, ends 23 Jan. £11-£15, concs available. Norfolk

EDINBURGH MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND The History of Scotland Ten thousand exhibits from the national collections tell the history of Scotland. Mon. Wed-Sat 10am-5pm, Tue 10am-Beanstalk Gladiator Vogue stars in the story of the boy who finds fame and fortune up a beanstalk. 26-27. 8pm, Sun 12noon-5pm, continuing, £3, concs £1.50, child free, season ticket £5, concs £2.50, free 5pm 8pm Tue. Chambers Street (0131-225 7534)

ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM, KELVINGROVE BT Dialogue in the ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE The Lion, The Witch And The Dark Explore the senses in sound, scent and touch exhibits, Ends 10 Jan. Wardrobe Adrian Noble directs Adrian Mitchell's adaptation of the CS Lewis Namia classic about children Travelling Companions: Monet and Seurat The third exhibition in the series focusses on two French painlings. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm. Sun who find adventure through a wardrobe 26, 29, 31 Dec. 2.30pm. 26, 28-31 Dec. 1 Jan, 7.15pm, ends 27 Feb. £5-£30Waterside painlings. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm (closed 26 Dec & 1 Jan (phone for Christmas opening). ends 31 Jan, free. Kelvingrove SWAN THEATRE A Month In The

(0141-287 2699)

HENRY MOORE INSTITUTE Les Cambodgiennes: Auguste Rodin Drawings made during the Royal Cambodian dance company's tour to France in 1906. Mon-Sun 10am-5.30pm, Wed 10am-9pm (phone for Orristmas operang), ends 3 Jan, free. The Headrow (0113-234 3158)

TATE GALLERY LIVERPOOL Modem British Art The refurbished gal leries exhibit works from the National

The Beanstalk Fun-filled family panto with TV stars from Gladiators and Home and Away, 26-30 Dec. 1 Jan. 2.30pm. 26; 28-30 Dec. 1 Jan. Urban Modern work examining city life. Cubism Forty paintings, sculp-tures and collages by Picasso, 7.30pm, ends 10 Jan. EB-£12, concs available. Cumberland Street Braque and others. Tue-Sun & Bank Hols 10am-6pm (phone for Christmas opening), ends Apr 99, free. A Mythology: Salvador Dali Major works from the Florida Dali museum. THEATRE ROYAL Beauty And The Beast Berwick Kaler stars in York's fabulous least of fun. 28, 30, 31 Dec. Tue-Sun & Bank Hols 10am-6om (phone for Christmas opening), ends 31 Jan. E5, concs £2.50, Albert Dock (0151-709 3223) 2.30pm, 28-31 Dec. 1 Jan. 7.30pm. ends 30 Jan. £7.50-£14.75, concs available. St. Leonards Place

> IANCHESTER WHITWORTH ART GALLERY Chris Ofili Challenging paintings inspired by black tradition. Mon-Sat 10amm, Sun 2pm-5pm (phone Spm, Sun Zpm Span (p. 24 Jan, free. University of Manchester, Oxford Road (0161-275 7452)

SHEFFIELD GRAVES ART GALLERY Double Games: Sophie Calle Comprehensive retrospective of Calle's work, in cludes a new work made with novelish Paul Auster. In two venues. Tue-Sat 10am-5pm (phone for Christmas opening), ends 30 Jan, free. Surrey

YORK CITY ART GALLERY Venice Through Canaletto's Eves Twentythree paintings and drawings by the Venetian artist. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30pm-5pm (phone for Christmas opening), ends 3 Jan, free. Exhibition Square (01904-551861)

CLASSICAL

SYMPHONY HALL London Concert Orchestra/Inglis Classical favouritres in a gala concert line-up. 26 Dec. 7.30pm. £6-£24.50. Mozart Festival Orchestra Watson Vivaldi's Four Seasons by candielight with other Baroque classics. 27 Dec. 7.30pm. £6-£23.50.

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London Concert Orchestra/Goulding Tchaikovsky Gala Night ending with the 1812 Overture. 28 Dec. 7.30pm. £6-£23.50.
London Concert Orchestra/Inglis See 26 Dec. 31 Dec. 9.15pm. £9.50-£33.50. Johann Strauss Orchestra/War ren-Green Music by the Strauss family, with the Johann Strauss

£26. Broad Street (0121-212 3333) ASSEMBLY ROOMS East of England Orchestra/Kok Viennese music by the Strauss family and others. 1 Jan. 7.30pm. £11-£17.

Dancers. 1 Jan. 3pm & 7.30pm. £6-

Market Place (01332-255800) EDINBURGH FESTIVAL THEATRE Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Andre Hogmanay Gala Concert with condcuto Martin Andre. 31 Dec. 6pm. £7-£19.50, concs available.

Andrea Quinn conducts and even of Strauss, 1 Jan. 7pm. E7-521, concs available. Nicolson Street (0131-529 6000)

MANCHESTER

BRIDGEWATER HALL Manchester Concert Orchestra/Inglis Rachmaninov, Bizet and Tchalkovsky. 27 Dec. 7.30pm. £10.50-£24.50. Opera Gala Night Arias with the Manchester Concert Orchestra. 28 Dec. 7.30pm. £13.50-£28.50. Halle Orchestra Popular classics. 29 & 30 Dec. 7.30pm. £6-£28. Manchester Camerata/Warren A
Gala concert of popular operatic excerpts. 31 Dec., 7.30pm, £15-£43.
Manchester Camerata/Warren Classics by the Strauss family and Lehar. 1 Jan. 3pm E9-E28. Lower Mosley Street (0161-907 9000)

OPERA

BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY HALL Opera Gala Night With the London Concert Orchestra conducted by Andrew Greenwood. 30 Dec. 7.30pm. £6-£26. Broad Street (0121-212 3333)

THE GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT

HALL Opera Gala Four distin-guished soloists accompanied by the Scottish Concert Orbestra. 29 Dec. 7.30cm, £14.50-£22.50, Sauchiehall Street (0141-287 5511) DANCE

THEATRE ROYAL Scottish Ballet: La Fille Mal Gardee Ashton's high spirited ballet featuring acclaimed ballerina Yurie Shinohara, 30 & 31 Dec, 1.30pm & 7.15pm, £3.50-£32 concs available. Hope Street (0141-332 9000)

LITERATURE

ILKLEY WAYS INTO WRITING (OVER 185) A supportive group allowing partici-pants to experiment with and develpanis to experiment with and devel-op a range of styles and approaches. Manor House Art Gallery and Mu-seum Castle Yard (01943-600066) Tue 10.30am-1pm, er E82 for course, concs. 10.30am-1pm, ends 9 Feb

NOTTINGHAM WORD Midlands-based writers present their work. Malt Cross Mu-sic Hall St James's Street (0115-941 1048) Thur 8.30pm-11pm. free.

COMEDY

THE GLEE CLUB New Years Eve Special with Junior Simpson, Andy Robinson, Jo Jo Smith, MC Ross Noble, 31 Dec. Spm. Hurst Street

FRED MACAULAY AT THE QUEEN'S HALL Wicked humour from the now TV and radio presen-ter. 28 Dec. 7.30pm-9.30pm, Clerk Street. (0131-668 2019/cc 0131-

GLASGOW THE COMIC CLUB AT BLACKFRI-ARS UNDERGROUND Phil Kay tops the bill in this Christmas Sperial 27 Dec. 9nm. Bell Street. (0141-552 5924), £6 includes glass of Yuletide cheer.

CLUBS

GLASGOW

HOGMANAY AT THE TUNNEL Featuring Radio 1's Dave Pearce, with Colin Tevendale along with Scott Mackay, Kevin McFarlane and Stephen Lee. 31 Dec. 10pm-5am. Mitchell Street (0141-204 1000) £18.

GATECRASHER & RADIO 1'S NEW YEAR'S EVE ESSENTIAL MIX AT LEEDS TOWN HALL Pete Tong, Judge Jules, Scott Bond and Gry Or-nadel 31 Dec, 12midnight-6am, The Headrow (0113-247 6962) £40.

LIVERPOOL CREAM NEW YEAR'S EVE Judge Jules, Seb Fontaine, Allister Whitehead, Sonique, Fathoy Slim, K-Klass and Paul Bleasdale. 31 Dec. 8pm-

6am. Woistenholme Square (0151-709 1693/cc 709 9172) £39. MANCHESTER MANCHESTER EVENING ARENA TEMPTATION Featuring New Order, Underworld, Laurent Gar-

nier. Lionrock Sound System and An-

drew Weatherall, 29 Dec, 9pm-6am, E30, info: 0181-963 0940. GRANADA STUDIOS NEW YEARS EVE PARTY AT GRANADA STU-DIOS Europe's largest film and television theme park's New Year's Eve party featuring Jeremy Healy, Craig Campbell and The Ultimate 1970s Experience. 31 Dec. 8pm-4am, Water

treet (0161-832 9090) £35 plus

MUSIC

POP, JAZZ, FOLK ETC

SHOOGLENIFTY, DRYZABONE Exponents of Acid Croft music. Osprey Suite, Aviernore Mountain Resort (01479-810363) 30 Dec. 9pm, £7, concs £5

BIRMINGHAM KING PLEASURE & THE BISCUIT BOYS Madcap Kansas swing and R&B outfit. Ronnie Scott's Broad Street (0121-643 4525) 28 Dec-9 Jan. phone for details.

EDINBLINGH CATHIE RAE WITH THE BRIAN KELLOCK TRIO Jazz singers' night Jazz Joint Morrison Street (0131-221

1288) 30 Dec. 10pm, £4, £3 concs. UB40, THE PRETENDERS, MANSUN Edinburgh's Hogmanay event with a big-name live music package and fire-works at midnight. Princes Street Gar-

dens Princes Street (0131-473 1999) 31 Dec, 8pm. £15-£17.50. CAROL KIDD Internationallyrenowned swing vocalist does Gersh-win, Randy Newman and everything

in between. The Queen's Hall Clerk Street (0131-668 2019.cc 667 7776) 31 Dec. 7.30pm, £8-£17.50.

GLASGOW SIXTEEN BANDER ALL DAY GIG Indie outfits from the experimental end of the spectrum, including Mo-tor Life Co. Speeder, Macroconsmica. The Yummy Fur PH Family, Mixu. El Hombre Trajeado. Eska. The Com-mercials, Bangtwister, Multiplex Cia-Lepers and more, Nice'N'Sleazy

ehall Street (0141-333 9637) 27 Dec. 8pm, free. MANCHESTER MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF SAMBA Mass Brazilian carnival ensemble. Band On The Wall Swan Street (0161-833 0682) 29 Dec. 8 30pm. \$5.

808 STATE, SYSTEM 7, BANCO DE GAIA Megadog New Year special with an old school dance and trance vibe. Manchester Academy Oxford Road (0161-832 1111) 31 Dec.

EVENTS

EDINBURGH REEL TO REAL CELLIDH Traditional Scottish music and song for Hogmanay. Assembly Rooms George Street (0131-220 4349) 30 Dec. 8pm-midnight. £12.

MANSFIELD **HUNT THE ELVES Volunteers** needed to join the search party for missing elves. A certificate and small thank you gift for all successful hunters. Sherwood Forest Visitor entre and Country Park (01623-823202) 27 Dec. 2pm-3pm. £1.50

per child (includes certificate, gift).

accompanying adults free. STAFFORD GIANT 3-DAY ANTIQUES FAIR Over 400 standholders selling a wide range of antiques. Bingley Hall County Showground Western Road (01785-247111) 1-3 Jan. 10am-5pm, £2.50, concs £1.50. child under 14 free

Centurions: The Marx



is among those paying homage to their finest film, Duck Soup - a. comedy about dictators that quickly degenerates into one of the purest illustrations of anarchy in the English language, and a prophetic

TRACEO T

COS MARC FLA 5.30 Radio 1 Review of the Year.

10.00 Mark Goodier. 1.00 Lisa l'Anson. 3.00 Top of the Pops. 4.00 The Official UK Top 40, 7.00 Radio 1's Dance Anthems with Dave Pearce. 10.00 Travor Nelson. 12.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 7.00 Citve Warren.

Radio 2.

(\$8-90 ENH: FIN) 7.00 Don Madean, 9.05 Steve Wright, 11.00 Parkinson's Sunday Supplement, 1.00 Desmond Carrington, 3.00 Frank Sinatra: the Voice of Desmond Carringion. Sub-reark seraira: the voice of the Centrary. 4.00 Sing Something Seasonal. 5.00 Starring Julie. 6.00 Pam Ayres - the Pick of 98. 7.00 Michael Ball and Lesley Garrett in Concert. 8.30 Sunday Hall Hour. 9.00 Alan Keith. 10.00 Melcolm Laycock. 11.00 The David Jacobs Collection. 12.00 Katring Leskanich. 3,00 - 4.00 Nicky Home. Radio 3

Radio 3

20 20 utate 50 8.00 On Air 9.00 Brian Kay. 11.00
Artist of the Week. 12.15 Bells upon Bells. 1.00
Lunchtime Concert. 2.50 The Harmonic Series. 3.00
Sprit of the Age. 4.00 100 Great Singers. 4.15
Certuriors. 4.30 The Year. 5.45 Sunday Feature:
Shakespeare 2000. 6.30 Private Passions. 7.30 Choir
Moder. 21 on Sunday Bear. Cedetara. 11.15 World Warks, 10.00 Sunday Play: Caderza, 11.15 World Music, 11.45 The Harmonic Series, 12.00 BBC Symphony Orchestra, 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night, Radio 4

Radio 4 -2. And Orac FAN 6.00 News Briefing, 6.05 -2. And Orac FAN 6.00 News Briefing, 6.05 -2. Something Understood, 6.35 On Your Farm, 6.57 Weather, 7.00 News, 7.05 Sunday Papers, 7.10 Sunday, 7.55 Radio 4 Appeal, 8.00 News, 8.05 Sunday. 7.55 Radio 4 Appeal. 8.00 News. 8.05 Sunday Papers. 8.07 Sunday Worship. 8.45 Letter from America. 9.00 News; Broadcasting House. 10.00 The Archers. 11.15 Desert Island Discs. 12.00 News; Itchy Feel. 12.30 I'm Sorry I Haven't a Ciue. 12.58 Weather. 1.00 The World This Weatherd. 1.30 Top Brain 1998. 2.00 Gardeners' Quession Time. 3.00 The Classic Serial: Bleak House. 4.00 News; Open Book. 4.30 Poetry Please. 5.00 News; A Mission to Chilise. 5.40 Victoriana. 5.54 Shipping Forecast. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.15 Pick of the Year. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Room for Improvement. 8.00 The Penthouse Apartment. 8.30 Word of Mouth's Festive Pressebook. 9.00 News; The Beat. 9.30 Analysis. 10.00 News. Westminster Hous. Word of Mouth's Festive Phrasebook, 9.00 News; The Beat, 9.30 Analysis, 10.00 News; Westminster Hour. 11.00 News; Hidden Tressures, 11.30 Something Understood, 12.00 News, 12.15 Experimental Feature; Great Skies, 12.30 Lata Story; Winter Stories, 12.48 Shipping Forecast, 1.00 As World Service, \$.30 World News, 5.35 Shipping, 5.40 Inshore Forecast, 5.45 Prayer for the Day, 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today, Raylin 4, 1 W

Radio 4 LW 1199-Hz; 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast, 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special.

Forecast, 12.00 - 7.00 Test Matich Special.

Radio 5 Live
(63 9 9 Hz MW, 7.00 Andrew Net. 9.00 (S3 9 SH2 LNV, 7.00 Andrew Neil 9.00 SportsWeek 10.00 Hayes on Sunday 12.00 Parms on TV. 12.30 Media Show. 1.00 Sunday Sport Review of the Year. 6.00 Scotists Premier Lasgue. 8.00 News Edra. 8.30 Time of My Life. 9.00 Dallyn Worldwide. 9.30 Out This Week 10.00 20th Century Vor - Britain and the Sea. 11.00 Late Night Currie. 1.00 Up All Night. 4.00 Extra Time. 5.00 - 7.00 Ruscoe and Co.

World Service Radio

1399 → LW 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Pick of the World.

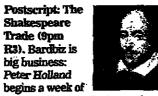
2.00 Newsdesy. 2.30 Meridian (Feature). 3.00 World.

News, 3.05 Write On. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 The

Worlds. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

MONDAY

CHOICE Postscript: The Shakespeare Trade (9pm R3). Bardbiz is big business:



programmes on what's new in Shakespeare studies by asking biographer Park Honan and editor of the Sonnets Katherine Duncan-Jones what we know about his life, and what it has to do with the work.

Radio 1 (37 Feb 37, He FLA 7.00 Chris Moyles, 10.00 Radio 1's All Time National Anthems, 6.00 The Best of Lemacq Live. Steve Lamacq looks back at the highlights of 1998, including a summer of testwals, Sound City, and exclusive showcases for a host of racs including REM and Boyzone, 12.00 The Breszeblock, 2.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 7.00 Clive Warren.

9A-90 (Milet: (1).5 6.00 Mo Dutta, 8.05 Sarah Kannedy (%)-(%) CAN-C 1.7, 6.00 Mo Dutta, 8.05 Sarah Kernedy. 10.00 Steve Wright's Mullion Sellers. 12.00 Alan Freeman, 2.00 Red's Simply Soulful Christmes. 3.00 The Festive Juliebox. 5.00 Johnnie Walker, 7.00 Humphrey Lyttellon, 8.00 Big Band Christmas Special, 8.30 Jools Holland Christmas Special. 9.30 In the Days before Rock 'n' Roll. 10.30 Bob Harris. 12.00 Ketrina Leslernich. 3.00 - 4.00 Nicky Horne. Pagetto 3.

on NGC at tHr FNG 6.00 On Air, 9.00 Masterwork (90.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 3.50 The Harmonic Series. 4.00 Mozart Voicas. 4.45 Music to Die For. 5.00 A Medieval Christmas. 5.30 Music Rooms. 6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Station. 7.00 Cabaret Cockells. 7.30 Performance on 3. 9.00 Postscript. 9.20 Brodsky Chartet. 10.45 Mixing it. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Georgas Bizel. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Ngdrff.

Through the Night. Radio 4 Through the Night.

Radio 4
23 4-94 6/JHT FM; 6.00 Today. 9.00 News; Start the
Week. 9.45 Serial: Peter Pan and Wendy. 10.00
News; Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; Dear Peter Pan.
11.30 My Gaiety Girts. 12.00 News; You and Yours.
12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30
Counterpoint. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 News;
Afternoon Play: Open Secrets. 3.00 Money Box Live.
3.30 The Smail Ad. 3.45 Nay, Ivy, Nay. 4.00 News;
The Food Programme. 4.30 Turning World. 5.00 PM.
5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Tm Sorry I
Haven't a Clue. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front
Row. 7.45 Under One Roof. 8.00 News; Brass Barmy.
8.30 Analysis. 9.00 News; Nature: A Wolf to the
North. 9.30 Start the Week. 10.00 The World Tonight.
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Five Dahls. 11.00 Radio 4
Appeal. 11.02 The Man without the Mobile. 11.30 The
Belds of Russis. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book:
The Restraint of Beasts. 12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35
Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45
Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 8.00 Familing Today.
Radio 4 LW

Radio 4 LW 199/Ft 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecest. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecest. 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special. Radio 5 Live (693 90/6/Ft 9/W 7.00 Brealdest. 90.00 Brean Heyes.

(e03 90.4 Hz ALV 7.00 Breakfast, 9.00 Brian Hayes, 12.00 The Midday News, 1.00 Bank Holiday Sport on 5.6.06 Sty. O-Soc. 8.00 Interesting, Very Interesting, 9.00 Cff Piste, 10.00 20th Century Vox - Great Sporting Moments 11.00 Late Night Live, 1.00 Up All Night, 4.00 Extra Time, 5.00 - 6.00 Cff Piste.

World Service Radio

World Service Radio (1984: LV) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Seven Days. 1.45 Wild Teles. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 On Screen. 3.00 World News. 3.05 Business Report. 3.15 Sport 3.30 Watershed. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

TUESDAY

CHOICE Galton & Simpson Radio Playbouse (11.30am R4). Paul Merton tried reviving the duo's



scripts for TV and came a cropper. Still, these four comedies - written for TV and revised for radio - must be worth trying. In "Cliquot et Fils", Richard Griffiths (above) is a French undertaker needing to revitalise business.

Radie 1 으로 하셨습니다. 라마 7.00 Chris Moyles, 10.00 Scott Mills, 1.00 Kevin Greening, 4.00 Dave Pearce, 8.00 Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session, 10.00 John Peel, 12.00 The Breezeblock, 2.00 Emma B. 4.00 -7.00 Chre Warren.

Radio 2 82-36 35345 Ftm **6.00 M**o Dutta, **8.05 Sarah Kennedy** 10.00 Richard Alfinson. 12.00 Jimmy Young. 2.00 Alex Lester. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Evelyn Alex Lester. 5.05 Johnnie Walker, 7.00 Evelyn Glennie's Classics, 8.00 Nigel Ogden. 9.00 The White Christmas Man. 10.00 Kennedy at Christmas. The virtuoso violinist returns in a special programme for the holiday season.10.30 Bob Harris. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Nicky Home.

Radio 3

(90.1-40 HAHC FM) 8.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week. Saint-Saens. 1.00 The Radio 24 unchitima Chrieset. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 3.50

3 Lunchtime Concert, 2.00 The BBC Orchestras, 3.50 The Harmonic Series. 4.00 Mozart Voices. 4.45 Music to Die For. 5.00 A Madieval Christmes. 5.30 Music Rooms. 6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Station.
7.00 Cabaret Cocktells. 7.30 Performance on 3, 9.20
Postscript. 9.40 Martera Lipovsek in Concent. 10.35
The Harmonic Series. 10.45 Book, Music and Lyrics.
11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week:
Bizet. 1.00 - 5.00 Through the Might.
Rantillo 4.

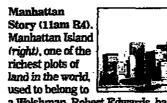
Bizet 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
Redio 6
Redio 6
Redio 6
Redio 7
Redio 8
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R

News Headines; Shipping Forecast 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast 12.00 - 9.45 Tast Match Special. Radio 5 Live

Radio 5 Live
(85 90%Hz MW, 6.00 Proops's Hoops, 6.30
Breaklast, 9.00 Brian Hayes, 12.00 The Midday
News, 1.00 Ruscose and Co. 4.00 Drive, 7.00 News
Extra, 7.30 Muscular Prose, 8.00 The Tuesday Match
10.00 20th-Century Vox - Money and Wealth, 11.00
Late Night Live, 1.00 Up All Night, 4.00 Extra Time,
5.00 - 6.00 A-Z of Entertainment,
World Service Radio
(198/Hz LW, 1.00 Newsdiesk, 1.30 Discovery, 2.00
Newsday, 2.30 Meridian (Live), 3.00 World News,
3.05 World Business Report, 3.15 Sports Roundup,
3.30 One Planet, 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

WEDNESDAY

CHOICE Story (11am RA). Manhattan Island



a Welshman, Robert Edwards, back in the 18th century. Since 1921 - as this programme explains - his descendants have been trying to prove their title to the land and win themselves \$680 million.

MBs. 1.00 Kevin Greening. 4.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 State Lamacq - the Evening Session. 10.00 John Peel. 12.00 Gilles Peterson. 2.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 7.00 Cive Warren.

Radio 2 99-90 (Mart: 9k), **6.00 Mo Dutta. 8.05 Serah Kennedy**.

41.64: Ft.5 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks 10.30 Anist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Salm-Saens. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 3.50 The Harmonic Series. 4.00 Choral Evensong. 5.00 A Medleval Christmas. 5.30 Music Rooms. 6.00

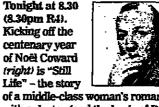
the Night. Radio 4 [92 4일 67.4년 도시 6.00 Today, 9.00 News; Midweek 9.30 The Rig. 9.45 Seriat: Peter Pan and Wendy. 10.50 News; Women's Hour. 11.00 News; Manhatta Story, 11.30 Choice Grantell. 12.00 News; You and Story, 11.30 Choice Grentell. 12.00 News; You and Yours, 12.57 Weather, 1.00 The World at One, 1.30 Wildbram, 2.00 News; The Archers, 2.15 Afternoon Play: Open Secrets, 3.00 News; Gardeners' Question Time Christmas Special, 3.30 The Small Ad, 3.45 k Didn't Mean a Thing, 4.00 News; Case Notes, 4.30 Thinking Allowed - the Larger Map, 5.00 PM, 5.57 Weather, 6.00 Sox O'Clock News, 6.30 Booksdi, 7.00 News; The Archers, 7.15 From Row, 7.45 Under One Roof, 8.00 News; Them and Us, 8.45 Keyword, 9.00 News; Animals Behaving Badly, 9.30 Michweek, 10.00 The World Tongly; 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Five Dahls, 11.00 Sean Look's 15 Minutes of Misery, 11.15 MacLean; the Memorex Years, 11.30 4 at the Store, 12.00 News, 12.30 The Late Book. The Restraint of Beasts, 12.48 Shipping Forecast, 1.00 As World Beasts. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast, 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47

6.00 Farming Today. Radio 4 LW Haddio 4 LW 1984-t-) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. Radio 5 Live (653 9094-t-) 3.76 6.00 Proops's Hoops, 6.30

1653 9(50+±1:M/ 6.00 Proops's Hoops, 6.30 Breakfast, 9.00 Brian Hayes, 12.00 The Midday News, 1.00 Fluscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive, 7.00 News Edra, 7.30 John Inverdale's Football Night, 9.30 Muscular Prose, 10.00 The End of the Year Show, 12.00 Interesting, Very Interesting, 1.00 Up All Night, 4.00 Edra Time, 5.00 - 6.00 Spotlight 98. World Service Radia (195+±1:W) 1.00 Newsdesk, 1.30 Omnibus, 2.00 Newsday, 2.30 Meridian (Books), 3.00 World News, 3.05 World Business Report, 3.15 Sports Roundup, 3.30 Brain of Brains, 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

CHOICE (8.30pm R4). Kicking off the



Encounter) - and "Red Peppers", a story of music-ball life that rather wastes the talents of Nickolas Grace and Susie Blake.

Hadde 1 77 5-96 5-15 7.00 Chris Moyles, 10.00 Scott Mills, 1.00 Kevin Greening, 4.00 The Official UK Top 40 of the Year, 7.00 Pele Tong's Essential Selection, 10.00 Radio 1 Live in Glasgow, 12.00 - 6.00 The Essential New Year.

Radio 2 186-89 간 부모 한 5 **6.00 Mo Dutta, 8.05 Sarah Kennedy.** 10.00 Richard Alinson. 12.00 Jimmy Young. 2.00 Alex Lester. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Luther Vandross New Year Collection. 8.00 Paul Jones. 9.00 Barry Took's Cornedy Classics, 9.30 Love 40 - New Balls Please, 10.00 Richard Allinson's New Years Eve Party. 1.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Nicky Radio 3

3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Mozart Volces. 4.45 Music to Dre For. 5.00 A Medieval Christmas. 5.30 Music Rooms. 6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Station. 7.00 Cabaret Cockrais. 7.30 Performance on 3. 9.30 Postsonpt. 9.50 Schubert Songs. 10.35 The Harmonic Series. 10.45 Book, Music and Lyrics. 11.30 Jazz on 3. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4

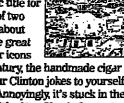
12.00 News, 12.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts. 12.48 Shipping. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News, 5.35 Shipping. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today. Radio 4 LW

Radio 4 LW
(193 Ho 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04
News; Shipping. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.
Radio 5 Live
(23. 573 Ho 9.0 Brian Hayes, 12.00 The Midday
News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News
Extra. 7.30 Muscular Prose. 8.00 inside Edge. 9.00
Hanne. 9.30 Secretion. 10 001. Hat Midday Live. 45 Hoops, 9.30 Sporshop, 10.00 Late Night Live, 11.30 Millennium Fever, 12.30 Up All Night, 4.00 Extra Time, 5.00 - 6.00 When Winter Comes.

World Service Radio Month, 2.00 Newsday, 2.30 Focus on Falth, 3.00 World News, 3.05 Business, 3.15 Sports Roundup, 3.30 Assignment, 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

(10.50am R3). An



and polkas than a body can stand.

Allia: Fl.:: 6.00 Mo Dutte. 8.05 Sarah Kennedy. 10.00 Richard Allinson. 12.30 The Huddlines Songbook. 1.00 Enc Clapton's Bluesbreakers. 2.00 Alex Lester. 5.00 Des Lynam. 7.00 Nev Diamond in Conversation with Paul Gambaccini, 8.00 Ainsley Hamoit's New Year Feast, 9.30 Listen to the Band: a Review of 1998, 10.00 Radio 2 Young Musician 1998 Showcase, 11.00 Lynn Parsons, 12.00 Lynn Parsons,

2.00 The BBC Orchestras 3.50 The Harmonic Series.
4.00 Mozart Voices, 4.45 Music to Die For. 5.00 A
Medieval Christmas, 5.30 Music Rooms, 6.00
Discovering Music with Leonard Starkin, 7.00 Cabarer.
Cocktails, 7.30 Performance on 3, 9.20 Postscript. 9.40 Yevgeni Kisam, 11.20 Harmonic Series, 11.30 And His Mother Called Him Bill. 12.00 Composer of the Week, Bizet, 1.00 - 5.00 Through the Night, Radio 4

History, 3.30 Haddo, ten Poems about Sound 3.45 Luttaby for an Insomniac Princess. 4.00 News, Open Book. 4.30 The Message 5.00 PM, 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News, 6.30 News Quiz of the Year, 7.00 News; The Archers, 7.15 Front Rev. 7.45 Under One Root. 8.00 News; Our Ned Question Please?. 8.45 Letter from America. 9.00 News, The Friday Play: Where Three Roads Meet. 10.00 The World Touriett Special 10.45 Root. at Retiting. Exemptible Play: Where Times Roads Meet. 10.00 The World Tonight Special. 10.45 Book at Bectime: Five Dahls. 11.00 Late Tacide. 11.30 Sporting Philanthropists. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts. 12.48 Shipping. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping. 5.40 Inshore. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 Leisure Updale. 5.36 - 6.00 Weather. Radfo 4 LW (1255) 9.45 - 10.00 An Act of Worship. 12.00 -

Process: 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special.

Radio 5 Live

©: ASH-C N-V 6.00 Procps's Hoops, 6.30

Breaklast, 9.00 Brian Hayes, 12.00 Middey News, 1.00

Ruscoe and Co. 3.00 Scottish Premier League, 5.00

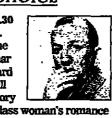
Diva, 7.00 News Edra, 7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight.



All Control of the Army South of the Army Soung 2.00 Alex Lester. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Malo's Maverick Christmas. 8.00 Mike Harding Review of the Year. 9.00 The Andy Peebles Soul Show. 10.00 Route 66 Revisited. 10.30 Bob Harris. 12.00 Kathina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Nicky Home.

Medieval Christmas. 5.30 Music Hooms. 6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Slattin, 6.55 Performance on 3. 7.45 The Coq and the Tsar. 8.10 The Golden Cockerel, Acts 2 and 3. 9.40 Postscript. 10.00 Faure, 10.35 The Hermonic Senes. 10.45 Book, Music and Lyrics. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Bizel, 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Nicht.

Tonight at 8.30 centenary year



booking fee.

of a middle-class woman's romance with a doctor (and the basis of Brief

10.30 Artist of the Week, 11.00 Sound Stories, 12.00 Composer of the Week, Saint-Saens, 1.00 The Radio

Radko 4 http://doi.org/10.1000/j.mews; In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. 9.30 Hancock and Son. 9.45 Sertal: Peter Pan and Wendy. 10.00 News; Woman's Hou; 11.00 News; From Our Own Correspondent. 11.30 Coming Alive 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Hidden Treasures, 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 Alternoon Play Open Secrets. 3.00 News; Call You and Yours. 0171 580 4444. 3.30 The Small Ad. 3.45 Swimming into Ninesy Nine. 4.00 Word of Mouth. 4.30 The Natarial World. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 The Womers. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row 7.45 Under One Root. 8.00 News; A Presence of Laughter: Coward's Century. 8.30 Tonight at 8.30. 9.00 Red Peppers. 8.45 My Life with Noel-Reminiscences of Graham Payn. 10.00 News; Pick of the Year. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Five Dahls. 11.00 99 How Are Ya? We're the Nualas. 11.30 Jason Byme. 12.00 News. 2.30 The Late Book: The Restraint of

CHOICE

Naked Beauties 🛭 enigmatic title for the first of two features about one of the great consumer icons

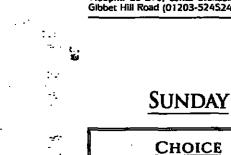
of the century, the handmade cigar (keep your Clinton jokes to yourself. please). Annovingly, it's stuck in the middle of the New Year's Concert from Vienna (above) - more waltzes

Pressor 1 (1) 5-9 6.00 Gilles Peterson. 8.00 Emma B. 11.00 Chns Moyles. 3.00 Scott Mills. 6.00 Peter Tongs Essential Selection. 9.00 Westwood's Hip Hop Arthures. 2.00 Estimate Communication Anthems. 2.00 Fabio and Groovender 4.00 - 7.00 Emma B. Radio 2

4.00 - 6.00 Lata Sharma. Racio 3 (A) 0.01 July 1549 6.00 On Air 9.00 Masterworks 10.15 The New Year's Day Concert, 10.50 Naked Beauties, 11.15 Concert, part 2, 12.35 Telemann, 12.50 The Harmonic Series, 1.00 Lunchtime Concert,

12,04 News: Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 12,00 - 7,00 Test Match Special.

Pulsobe and CO. 3:00 Scottish Premier League. 5:00 Drive. 7:00 News Extra. 7:30 Alan Green's Sportsright. 8:00 Park Life. 10:00 Late Night Live. 1:00 Up Ali Night. 4:00 Extra Time. 5:00 - 6:00 Brief Lives. World Service Radio 10:01 Politics. 1:00 Newsdesk 1:30 Small Worlds. 1:45 Short Story. 2:00 Newsdesk 1:30 People and Politics. 3:00 World News. 3:05 Business. 3:15 Sport. 3:30 Science in Action. 4:00 Newsdesk, 4:30 Weekend. 5:00 Newsday. 5:30 Curilook. 5:55 - 6:00 Spotlight.



Brothers

(4.15pm R3).

David Thomson

satire of total war.

NEW YEAR'S EVE TELEVISION

BBC1

- 7.00 News (5194685). 7.10 Poddington Peas (6738219). **7:15** Teletubbies (5722561). 7.40 Yog's Treasure Hunt (1674948). 8.00 Newsround Review (6420561). 8.35 Taz-Mariia (8032870), 9.00 Sweet Valley High (7514764), 9.25 The Fame Game (7533899). 9.50 Teletubbies (1606696). 10.20 News (8172561).
- 10.30 Herbie Goes Bananas (1980). More Disney adventures starring the motivated Beetle (T) (19122).
- 12.00 Wipeout (S)(T) (97/8054), 12.25 Laughing for Ages (S) (8485344), 1.00 News; Weather (T) (21207412), 1.15 Neighbours (S)(T) (58675832).
- 1.40 Getting Even With Dad (1994). Kids' comedy starring Macaulay Culkin (S)(T) (75861431).
- 3.25 The World's Strongest Man (S)(T) (2750388). 3.55 Boyzone: A Live and Kicking Year (S)(T) (3942509). 4.20 Blue Peter - Magic Moments (S) (T) (6448685) 4.45 Neighbours (S) (T) (9227325). 5.10 News; Weather (T) (2878783). 5.25 Regional News (T) (2873238).
- 5.40 Ell Beethoven's 2nd (1993). Big St Bernard's carrine sequel (T) (6224967).
- 7.00 EastEnders (S)(T) (691621).
- 7.45 Jane's Cruise to the Stars. Cruiseunknown to chart-topper (S)(T) (326832)
- 8.30 H: DE Naked Eurovision.
 Behind the scenes of the song fest. See Choice, below (S)(T) (654412).
- 9.10 Shirley Bassey: Viva Diva! The singing legend in concert (S)(T) (804141).
- 10.00 News; Weather (T) (434509). 10.15 They Think It's All Over. (25.4412). 10.45 The End of the Year Show with
- Happy New Year (S) (9187997). 12.35 Carry On Columbus (1992). Formulaic comedy (S)(T) (6751343).

Angus Deayton (S) (T) (155073). 11-40 New Year Live (S) (352344). 12-30

2.05 News 24 (82777623). To 6.30am.

BBC2

- 6.20 Hill Limelight (1952). Charles Chaplin's swansong (T) (61660035).
- 8.35 FIM Come Blow Your Horn (1963). Frank Sinatra entertains a string of ladies in this adaption of a Neil Simon play (T) (18824702).
- 10.25 Perfectly Frank (4187696), 10.30 The West (S) (89365561). **12.25** Classics for Kids (S) (1723899). **115** The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (S) (874325). 2.15 Perfectly Frank (S) (68579764), **2.20** Rex the Runt (S) (68590257), **2.30** Rex the Runt (S) (1295764). **2.40** Cambridge Folk Festiva (S) (2245493). **3.20** The Old Lady and the Pigeons (1100649). 3.45 Video Nation - Best of 98 (S) (7035892). 4.25
- 4.30 Figh Society (1956). Grace Kelty's lest film, a musical remake of The Philadelphia Story that gets by on sheer high splifts (52895122).

Perfectly Frank (S) (1399851).

- 6.10 Poppea. Continuing Monteverdi's opera about intrigue and sexual politics at Emperor Nero's court (S) (375412).
- 6.45 Decisive Moments: Images from the News 1998. The big news pictures of the year and the people who took them (S)(T) (777073).
- 7.45 Mark Lamarr's New Year In. Laman introduces the schedule to welcome in 1999 (S)(T) (163528).
- 7.50 New Year Horrors (S)(T) (617764). 8.20 Rex the Runt (S)(T) (580431). 8.30 Making of Robot Wars (S)(T) (543967). 9.05 The Simpsons (S)(T) (226122).
- 9.30 A Kick up the Archive. Kevin Turvey, Mason Boyne, Rab C Nesbitt and other much-loved characters return in a comedy compilation (S)(T) (487899).
- 10.15 The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975). Cult pop musical, sci-fi spoof with Tim Curry (T)
- 11.55 Jools's Sixth Annual Hootenamy (S)(T) (187122), 1.15 Best of Glastonbury '98 (S)(T) (950197). To 3am.

NEW YEAR'S EVE CHOICE

RICHARD FAIRBRASS of Right Said Fred takes us behind the scenes of the campest show of the year in Naked Eurovision (8.30pm BBC1, left). In this fly-on-the-wall

piece, he meets Dana International, the transsexual Israeli singer who went on

to win the Eurovision Song Contest. Meanwhile, the Greek composer Yiannis is being disqualified from the competition and escorted from Birmingham's National

Indoor Arena by security. Such scenes

aren't normally seen by the contest's 100

ITV Granada

- 6.00 GMTY (1798141), 9.25 News (4039122). 9,35 Tiny Toons (1614615). 10,00 Rocky and the Dodos (R)(S) (7920986) 10.20 Brilliant Creatures (T) (3002122).
- 10.40 Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken (1991). Disney drama with Gabrielle Anwar (57150829).
- 12.20 Granada News (T) (6470783). 12.30 News; Weather (T) (2155493).
- 12.50 Watership Down (1978). Rabbits on the run in the celebrated animation of Richard Adams' story (1)
- 2.30 Far from the Madding Crowd (R)(T) (23401). 4.30 Talent of Tomorow (5013344). **5.20** Granada News (T) (8969851). **5.30** News (T) (507798).
- 5.40 Emmerdale (S)(T) (598764).
- 6.10 Freddie Starr Show (T) (100035).
- 7.00 Dingles Down Under (S)(T) (26615). 8.30 The Bill (T) (46325).
- 9.30 The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: The Orchard Walls. Story of brooding passion and tragedy set in 1941, starring Sylvia Sims (S)(T) (91388).
- 10.30 News: Weather (1) (404561).
- 10.45 Stanley Baxter in Person. An interview with the comic (531275).
- 11.45 Happy New Year From Edinburgh Castle (463509).
- 12.05 Down and Out in Beverly Hills (1986). Richard Dreyfuss takes tramp Nick Notte home (S)(T) (256791).
- 2.00 Instant Replay (94710).
- 3.00 Georgy Girl (1966). Ugly duckling Lynn Redgrave survives the Swinging Sixties (274604).
- 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (48311739): 5.05 Hurricanes (S)(T)(1165081): 5.30 Bugs Burny (7535352): 5.55 News (7248401).

Sky Premier

8.00 Cabrouse Descrive (1999, 147783) 8.00 A Kid in King Arthur & Court (1999) (1958). 18.00 Carport (1999) (1958). 18.00 Carport (1999) (1964)

Takes a Lover (955) (271472).

Sky Movie-Mar.

Out Jiss Vernes (900 Lesques down the American (654) (5557). 230 Behmd the Welste's (956) (1449965).

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4.00 Coment (164) (174589) 6.00 Port Exposs (165) (16459), 4.00 AFt One Hunter's two: 1653 (164459), 4.00 AFt One Hunter's two: 1653/641, 16.30 Octon Kims (164) (172703), 12.30 kir Majastyk (163), 17374(17376), 1737 (17376), 17376), 17376(173

Channel 4

- 7.00 Ovide (R) (55493). 7.30 The Magic School Bus (R)(S) (74528). 8.00 The Big Breakfast (46257). 10.00 Buzz (49344). 10.30 Eerie, Indiana (R) (70141). 11.00 Madison (S) (5561). 11.30 Babylon 5 (98141). 12.30 The Windrush Years (R) (4621431). **L15** Schumann's Lost Romance (S) (7761615). 2.10 Schumann Cello Concerto (17885073), 2.35 Roots to Success (6941870). 2.50 Wine Hunt (S) (5177621). 3.15 Tool Stories (1118677) 3.50 Fifteen to One Highlights (9115764) 4.30 Countdown (9215580). 4.55 Picki Lake (R) (7541035).
- 5.30 Garden Doctors (899).
- 6.00 Riverdance the New Show. New steps in New York (R)(S)(T) (7880696).
- 7.10 Till The Best of Benny Hill (1974). Rude skits (T) (1109832)
- 8.30 Heroes of Comedy. Portrait of Benny HW (R)(S)(T) (44967).
- 9.30 The Greatest Rory Ever Told. Rory Bremner gives his impressions of 1998. Highlights include a Royal Family edition of Jerry Springer and Ainsley Hamott's Can't Cook, Don't Give a Toss
- 10.30 Frasier. Frasier reveals Roz's pregnancy to her mother (R) (S)(T) (71870).
- 11-00 Your Favourite Frasier. Your chance to choose from four episodes (859798).
- 11.15 TFI Friday New Year (243306). 11.45 Eurotrash New Year (242677). 12.15 Adam and Joe's Toy Movie Special (8775352).
- 1.05 House Party (1990). Christopher Reid and Christopher Martin (aka rap stars KidhPlay) try to organise a large rap bash (675994)
- 2.55 Beach Blanket Bingo (1965). Frankie Avalon beach party. With Annette Funicello (522468).
- 4.50 The Total Balafaika Show (3212826). 5.50 Old Mother Hubbard (7247772). 5.55 Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp (7279371). To 6am.

Channel 5

- 6.00 The Wind in the Willows (R) (25509509). **6.25** Roobarb (37096615). 6.30 Dappledown Farm (R) (4280412). 7.00 Wimzie's House (R) (6623899). 7.30 Mikshakel (S) (2262899). 7.35 Hevakazoo (R)(S) (6827702). 8.00 George of the Jungle (R) (7238054).
- 8.30 Lassie: Flight of the Cougar (1967). Feature-length romp with the wonder dog (95199986).
- 9.50 My Story (6768073), 10,20 Sunset Beach (1798603). 11.10 Leeza (8104783). 12.00 5 News (7231141). 12.30 Family Affairs (2852851), 1.00 Bold and the Beautiful (6615870). 1.30 Wowfabgroov) (2851122). 2.00 100 Per Cent (1132702). 2.30 Good Afternoon (S) (2806677).
- 3.30 FILM Fort Apache (1948). Cavalry disciplinarian Henry Fonda at odds with John Wayne (34425865).
- 5.55 Postcards (R) (2063412).
- 6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (2067141).
- 6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5309702).
- 7.05 Seems like Old Times (1980). Goldle Hawn, Charles Grodin and Chevy Chase romp through a sassy Neil Simon work (T) (80220702).
- 9.05 Night Fever (S) (7655899)
- 9.55 Stanley and Irls (1989). Blue-collar factory romanca, with Jane Fonda and Robert De Niro (T) (6107832).
- 11.50 Night Fever (S)(T) (7448122).
- 12.05 Common Law Cabin (1967). Violent thriller (S) (40312062).
- 1.25 FILM Soldiers of innocence (1990). War veteran Dennis Christen revisits Korea (5910401).
- 3.20 The Boy Who Stole a Million (1960). Unconvincing Spanish bank caper (45971246).
- 4.40 Prisoner: Ceil Block H (3354284) 5.30 100 Per Cent (6768509). To 6am.

SATELLITE & CABLE

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NEW YEAR'S DAY TELEVISION

BBC1

- **6.30 Children's BBC:** Teletubbies (S) (7690307). **6.55** Postman Pat (R) (2909710). **7:10** Arithur (R)(S) (2320975). 7.35 Brambly Hedge (R)(S)(T) (3216197). 8.00 Yog's Treasure Hunt (R) (5028604). 8.20 Blue Peter - Magic Mornents (S)(T) (3485541), 8.50 Taz-Mania (7708642), 9.15 911 Live in Malaysia (S) (6860062). 9.40 The Fame Game (S)(1) (5246130). **10.05** Telefubbies (S) (1543536), **10.35** Rotten Ralph (S) (5275555).
- 11.00 The Little Rescals (1994). Dim attempt to revive childish Our Gang slapstick (S)(T) (8795555).
- 12.20 Wipeout (S)(T) (4836555). 12.45 Laughing for Ages (S) (298975). 1.45 News; Weather (T) (94989739). 1.25
- Neighbours (S)(T) (60685623). 150 Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968). Tatty but endearing fantasy. With Dick Van Dyke, Sally Ann Howes (T)
- 4.05 Are You Sitting Comfortably? (S)(T) (2626888). 4.45 Neighbours
- (S)(T) (1022517). 5.10 News (5883826). 5.25 K-9 (1989). Comical cop James Belushi teams up with an Alsatian to bust
- a drugs ring (S)(T) (95719284). 7.00 The World's Strongest Man. The year's contest ends with the final in one of Morocco's oldest towns (S)(T) (9997).
- 8.00 FILM Apollo 13 (1995). Tom Hanks tells Houston he has a problem. No sweat - the clean-cut Apollo 13 crew has "the right stuff" (S)(T) (24087975).
- 10.15 News; Weather (1) (797994).
- 10.35 Airplane II: the Sequel (1982). Shell-shocked pilot Robert Hays finds himself at the controls once again in a spoof space shuttle sequel. With Julie Hagerty, Lloyd Bridges (T) (1251791).
- 11.55 Fletch Lives (1989). Chavy Chase plays the smug reporter in likeably ludicrous sequel (S)(T) (984062).
- 1.30 News 24 (9620181). To 6am.

BBC2

million worldwide audience.

- 6.00 A King in New York (1957). Chaplin's riposte to being kicked out of America (T) (48931284).
- 7.45 Days of Thriss and Laughter (1961). Stent-cornedy compilation (216791).
- 9.15 Perfectly Frank (S)(T) (7611739).
- 9.20 Knights of the Round (28712265).
- (5779623). 12.35 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (S)(T) (5547604). 1.35 Cambridge Folk Festival (458642). 2.45 The Shealtiels (S)(T) (410265).
- 3.50 The Robe (1953). Biblical
- 6.00 Poppea. Monteverdi's opera (9.77178).
- 6.40 UK Confidential a Leviathan Special. Peep at secret papers of 1968, released today (S) (628791).
- 7.20 Rex the Runt (S)(T) (800826).
- press take on the broadsheets (S)(T) (5).
- 8.00 Gardening from Scratch 2 (5888).
- 9.00 The New Year Armistice. Topical stire and comedy (S)(T) (533975).
- 9.35 Rex the Runt (S)(T) (281623).
- 10.15 Bang, Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer (S)(T) (188159).
- 10.45 Young Guns Go for It! Story of the band Culture Club (S)(T) (818739).
- 11.25 Boy George Video Diary (172604). 11.45 Tales from the Far Side 2 (S)

ITV Granada

- 6.00 GMTV (6193826). 9.25 Percy the Park Keeper (R)(S) (6875994). 9.55 Rocky and the Dodos (R)(S) (8652284), 10.10 Brilliant Creatures (R)(S)(T) (6665449). 10.30 The Canterville Ghost (R)(S)(T) (27536). 12.00 Are You Afraid of the Dark? (R)(S)(T) (78130). **12.30** News (T) (17987710). **12.40** Emmerdale (R)(S)(T)
- (5533401). 1.40 Cartoon (86009333). 1.55 Once upon a Forest (1993).
 Animated adventure (T) (7108265).
- 3.15 Far from the Madding Crowd (R)(T) (344333). 5.15 News (T) (5886913).
- 5.25 FILM Black Beauty (1994). Version of Anna Sewell's tale of the hard-done-by horse (S)(T) (95704352).
- 7.00 Do-it-Yourself, Mr Bean. Rowan Atkinson as Mr B makes a loss at midnight on New Year's Eve, but finds a
- bergain at the sales next day (R) (8994). 7.30 Coronation Street (S)(T) (81).
 - 8.00 Who Wants to be a Millionaire? Quiz show (S)(T) (5642).
 - 8.30 Till You Only Live Twice (1967). James Bond adventure with Sean Connery vs SPECTRE. Donald Pleasence is Blofeld, script is by Roald Dahl (1) (99454772)
- 10.35 News; Weather (T) (825159).
- 10.45 Alien (1979). Serious contender for the best sci-fi monster movie ever made. Ridley Scott's daustrophobic shocker is a faultless fright machine. With Sigourney Weaver (S)(T) (66338401).
- 12.55 Greatest Goals (8321598) 2.05 Club@Vision (S) (7483531).
- 2.50 Stormy Weathers (1992). This Cybil Shephard comedy is more cloudy than stormy, as her private eye stumbles into a murderous drugs in politics plot while on the trail of an Italian isto's relative (329024).
- **4.25 Entertainment Now** (R) (2152208). **5.20 Making of Dr Dolittle (1161444). 5.55 News** (7215173). To 6am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 Sesame Street (R)(S) (69604). 7.00 For Better or for Worse (R) (25197). 7.30 The Magic School Bus (R)(S) (62884). 8.00 The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (77062). 10.00 The Bigger Breakfast (7) (87449). 10.30 Eerie, Indiana (S)(T) (85420). 11.00 Madison (T) (7081). 11.30 Babylon 5 (S)(T) (7577130). 12.25 Explosive Dance (1076517). 1.25 Racing from Cheltenham (49058468), **3.40** The Fifteen-to-One Grand Final (R)(S)(T) (5363130), **4.30** Christmas Countdown Finai (S)(T)
- (1010772). 4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (1039807). 5.20 Frank Sinatra in Japan. Frank Sinatra in concert from the Budokan Hall
- in Tokyo in 1985 (R)(S)(T) (95703623). 6.55 FILM On the Buses (1971). First of three soin-off features from the TV show.
- With Reg Varney (T) (42766246).
- 8.30 Brookside (S)(T) (2791). 9.00 CHOICE My Favourite Frasier. irst of five shows this evening starring Kelsev Grammer as Dr Frasier Crane. See
- Choice, below (T) (4517). 9.30 Frasier's Favourite Frasier Kelsey Grammer makes his own choice
- of episode (S)(T) (14420). 10.00 The Frasier Story (T) (745159).
- 10.40 Frasier. Viewers' choice (T) (879739).
- 11.10 Cheers (I) (776449). 11.45 The Man with Two Brains (1983). Steve Martin's parody of mad-

scientist stories (T) (9888)

- 1.20 All of Me (1984). Lawyer Steve Martin is forced to share his body with the soul of a woman (Lily Tomlin) (779753).
- 3.00 The Man Who Changed His Mind (1936). Boris Karloff monkeying around in the lab (9690956). 4.15 Dr Bull (1933). Homespun cornedy with Will Rogers (7759682).
- 5.35 Stupid Dogs (7509937). To 6am.

Channel 5

- **6.00 Wind in the Willows** (R) (24035933) **6.20** Roobarb (R) (50926587). **6.30** Dappledown Farm (R) (7039623). **7.00** Wimzie's House (R) (9394284). **7.30** Mikshake! (S) (4558307). **7.35** Havakazoo (R) (S) (9025197). **8.00** George of the Jungle (R) (1465888).
- 8.30 Lassle: the New Beginning (1979). A new beginning, perhaps, but the same old story (56131265).
- 10.05 My Story (3425555), 10.20 Sunset Beach (S)(T) (245081), 11.10 Lecza (R)(S) (2302807), 12.00 5 News (T) (1468975). 12.30 Family Affairs (R)(S)(T) (9234604). 1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (9393555). 1.30 Wowfabgroovy (9233975). 2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (6654975).
- 2.30 Football Review of the Year.
- Presented by Steve Scott (S) (9359284).
- 6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5515284).
- 6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (1197710). 7.05 Ghostbusters (1984). Dan Aykroyd and team take on a convention of spooks and sorites in this New York
- supernatural comedy (S)(T) (95095468). 9.00 Duggan - Death in Paradise (1997). Plodding police drama
- 10.50 Melinda's Big Night In (S) (6307505). 11.35 Compromising Situations (5680371).
- 12:10 Finders Keepers, Lovers Weepers (1968). Another Russ Meyer turkey that somehow escaped the Christmas carve-up (40304043).
- Teenage Alcoholic (1975). Above-average TV movia about a teenage girls battle with the bottle (1690983).
- 3.35 Wild Beauty (1946), Routine heart-warmer (9654208).

SATELLITE & CABLE

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- Foderation Rev (5950) 5.90 6.00 H2O (58840).

 Siky Sports 2

 4.00 Angling Meeten; (2952772), 200 Aerobox;
 Ox Giving (5007052), 230 Footbal League Resew (895558), 8.30 Whot at Weetening (653500) 8.00 Fish TV Angling Meetening (65550), 8.00 The Rugby Oxb (635501), 11.00 Leve Heckey (65950) 8.00 The Rugby Cale (65950), 11.00 Leve Heckey (65950), 2.00 Angling Mexicans (276739), 9.30 There World (659559), 8.00 Oarts (659559),

- (887352), 12-30 Gosts and Biospors (829'0), 2.00 Scottesh Fepabal Matherwell v Kimarinack (85559, 5.00 Benery Fights of 86 (86990), 8.00 Scottesh Entra New Year Special (802364, 11,00 Scottesh Factbal Motherwell vs Kimarinock, 1987'1), 12-30 Benery Fights of 86 (879'792, 3.30) World Wieseling Foderation Rew (89050), 5.30 6.00 HZC (88840)
- Very Sports 3 12:00 Tiany World Sport ECOUNTS 4, 130 Feb TV Angling Mayster (Sports Sport Les Staing MOV-9488; ALOS The Rudy Club (ES-9842) 13:00 Survival of the Filtest (19982913, 8:30 Gillone World

about cop John Bach who gets caught up in a local case on holiday (1) (12605772).

- 130 Sarah T: Portrait of a
- 4.15 Niight Stand (33705173), 4.40 Prisoner: Call Block H (3321956), 5.30 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (8053591), To 6am.

Sport Special (4209/401), 6.00 Wild Spens (431276-93, 6.30 H2O (431699-9), 2000 Motorcycling (40499333), 8.00 Go Skeling (4049997), 90.00 Wessing (4253377), 12.00 Cost 2.55 - 7.00 Shoping (1856-47) Paramount Connedy Channel 7.00 Cusies: §178, 7.30 Dismond; (17-8, 8.00 Researce (1858), 8.30 Just Shopt Me (421), 9.00 Cycle (1877), 8.30 Seriest (2008), 90.00 Feb. Myric P.cza (1868) (1815), 92.00 Linterman (1868) 1.00 Dist (7818), 1.30 The Croc (1819), 2.00 Dismond (1868), 2.30 Solop (1877), 3.00 Wings \$88569, 3.30 Myristand (1866), 4.00 Cose

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 (1786710), 12.40 Shortland Street (344.57),
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 Street (1887).
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 - Ferry to Hong Kong (Heschizz), 4.36 Firm:
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- Uister Ty As Granada



NEW YEAR'S DAY CHOICE

PEOPLE AS diverse as Prince Charles and Jerry Springer are said to be fans of TV's most sophisticated sitcom, which one critic called "a heartening reminder that you can please the masses, the elite and the sponsors all at the same time". Tonight's blissful Frasier Night (C4, left) schedule starts with My Favourite Frasier (9pm), in which the stars of the show, the cast of Cheers (in which the character first appeared), and other celebs choose their favourite episode. Later, The Frasier Story (10pm) reveals how the show is made.

- Table (1953). Passionless pageant 11.10 Happy New Year (7935062), 11.15 New Year's Day Concert from Vienna (S)
- saga with Richard Burton (1) (28185081)
- 7.30 University Challenge. The tabloid
- 8.30 Gardeners' World (S)(T) (7623).
- 9.45 The Young Ones (R)(T) (196178).
 - (659333). **12.35** Sliders (S)(T) (7136821). **1.20** Sliders (S)(T) (8399531). To 210am.

Sky Premier 6.00 A Charge of Heart (997) (73547), 8.00 The Incredite Journey (950) (25552) 10.00 The Vischez 6890, (2594, 45.00 A Charge of Heart (950) 19975; 2.00 The Incredite Journey (950) (1995), 4.00 Jitam (9507) (1051), 6.00 The Vinteria (950) (6550), 8.00 Ferris Challetts (950) (2004, 90.00 The English Pattert (1996) (5545075), 12.40 Datholius (950), 600444, 2.30 Rough Mage (1995) (94376), 4.35 6.00 Jiters (1997) (17950) Skir Manufel Mage.

(994.76), 445 - 6.00 Jinto (1997) (57550).

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6.00 Kinshing Paint (1997) (504.9), 7.20 Blue
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1.900 Goodsia vo Gigan (1973) (7060). 1.00 Blue
floated (1998) (3906.1), 9.00 Eurithers (1998) (206.9).

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(1970) Sky Cinema 4.00 Champion (549) (3,37939), 8.00 The Pha Parable (1549) (7,5640), 8.00 The Nathy Probasor (563) (7,75626); 9.000 baddom (566) (154529), 17.45 Chel (565) (294936), 1.25 Danien - Chroni (1576) (5560) (55

Sky Sports 1 840 Super Langue - Super Tres 1998 (AUSO)9, 7,00 Sky Sports Centre (F420) 8,00 World Winding Februarian (State) 9,00 World Winding (MSES) 9,300 Spocer Extra New Year Special

TUESDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

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Commence

- 7.00 News (T) (7594261), 7:10 Poddington Peas (R) (6794875), 7:15 Teletubbies (S) (5795417), 7:40 Yogis Treasure Hunt (R) (1630504), 8:00 To Me... to You (S)(T) (79078). **8.30** Taz-Mania (78349). **9.00**Sweet Valley High (R)(S) (7570320). **9.25**The Fame Game (R)(S)(T) (7580707). **9.55** Teletubbies (S) (9744707). **10.20**News; Weather (T) (8145417).
- 10.30 Turtles (1990). New York is cleared of crane by the mutants (S)(1) (5573788).
- 11.55 Wipeout (S)(T) (8161726). 12.20 Laughing for Ages (S) (9785726). 12.50 The Weather Show (S)(T) (73535639). 1.00 News (T) (21270368), 1.15 Neighbours (S)(T) (58648788), 1.40 Battersea Dogs' Home (S)(T) (97821523), 2.10 20,000 Leagues under the Sea (S)(T) (7:53962). 3.35 The World's Strongest Man (S)(T) (1500252).
- 4.05 GILL Mr Nammy (1993), "Hulk" Hogan babysits brat kids (S)(T) (4579894).
- 5.25 Blue Peter the Best Bits (S)(T) (8556726). 5.55 Neighbours (T) (712436).
- 6.20 News; Weather (T) (571349).
- 4. 6.35 Regional News (T) (996894).
 - 6.50 Only Fools and Horses. 1991 Christmas special (R)(S)(T) (562417).
 - 7.40 EastEnders (S)(T) (767504).
 - 8.10 Born to Be Wild Chimpanzee Challenge with Nicholas Lyndhurst (S)(T) (707349).
 - 9.00 CHOCE The Echo. New mystery from Minette Walters. See Choice, below (S)(T) (7456558).
 - 10.15 News; Weather (T) (207900). 10.45 Come Dancing 50 (S)(T) (775397). 11.45
 - 12.50 Doctor at Large (1957). Dirk Bogarde tries the quiet life at a country practice (T) (606276).
 - 2.25 News 24 (38323856), To 7am.

42 Up (R)(S)(Ť) (509726).

BBC2

- 6.15 Woman of Paris (1923).
 Charlie Chaplin's epic slent melodrama.
 With Edna Purviance (9772287).
- 7.35 Match of the Day (R)(S)(T) (8288610).
- 8-55 FIEM On the Town (1949). Rousing musical with shore-leave sailors Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra (T) (21284610).
- 10.30 Perfectly Frank (9555900), 10.35
 The West (T) (5678829), 12.00 Cricket
 the Ashes (S) (70707), 12.30 Classics
 for Kids (S) (T) (7501542), 1.20 The Royal
 Institution Christmas Lectures (4437207),
 2.20 Perfectly Feet, (SVI) (\$5822223) 2.20 Perfectly Frank (S)(T) (88532233).
 2.25 Flex the Runt (S)(T) (68555184).
 2.35 Rex the Runt (S)(T) (6092558).
 2.50 Shooting the Century (2564271).
 3.35 Perfectly Frank (S)(T) (6870504).
- 3.40 FILM Ocean's Eleven (1960).
 Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin star in this crime caper (1) (29061287).
- 5.45 Poppea. Welsh National Opera production of Monteverd's opera telling of sex, intrigue and revenge at the court of Emperor Nero (S) (798610).
- **6.20 The Simpsons** (S)(T) (217639). **6.45** TOTP 2 (S) (452691).
- 7.30 The Clinton Complex How to Live with a Dysfunctional President Mark Lawson attempts to find out how, after all this year's scandals, Bill Clinton has managed to hang onto office (S)(T) (649691).
- 8.10 The Travel Show (S)(T) (798691).
- 9.00 Steptoe and Son Christmas Special. Classic cornedy (T) (124813).
- 9.45 The Christmas Armistice. A look back over 1998 (S)(T) (280233).
- 10.15 Nixon (1995). Anthony Hopkins is eerily good as disgraced president Richard Nixon. With Paul Sorvino (S)(T) (15387981).
- 1.20 Suddenty (1954). Frank
 Sinatra plays the vicious leader of hired assassins (3956092). To 240am.

ITV Granada

- 6.00 GMTV (1761097). 9.25 News (T) (4002078). 9.35 Tiny Toon Adventures (R)(S)(T) (1670271). 10.00 Brilliant Creatures (R)(S)(T) (8069981).
- 10.25 D2: The Mighty Ducks (1995). Emilio Estevez coaches ice-hockey brats (S)(T) (69300436).
- 12.20 Granada News (T) (5443639). 12.30 News; Weather (T) (93146). 1.00 Coronation Street (R)(T) (74184).
- 1.30 FILM Homeward Bound: the incredible Journey (1993), Fluffy adventure for kids (S)(T) (34320).
- 3.00 Cartoon (8459691). 3.05 News (T) 8458962). 3.10 Local News (167389-1)
- Superman (1975), Comic-book hero's adventures (T) (93617639).
- 5.50 News; Weather (T) (888558)
- 6.10 Granada Tonight (T) (705900).
- 7:10 Emmerdale (S)(T) (167455).
- 7.40 The Wishing Well (1) (785900).
- 840 Home Alone (1990). Macaulay Culkin as the pint-sized nemesis of bungling crooks (94493271).
- 10.00 News: Weather (T) (465875)
- 10.15 What's a Carry On? The Carry On stars reunite to celebrate 40 years of comedy (T) (553122).
- 11.15 Carry On Cleo (1965). Elizabeth Taylor's Cleopatra is spoofed in this Carry On caper (T) (553233).
- 1.00 Nationwide Football League Extra (22295).
- 2.00 Sword of the Vallant (1983). Swashbuckler (373363).
- UB40 Live in the New South Africa (3455295). 5.05 Hurricanes (S)(T) (7746653). 5.30 Bugs Bunny Overtures to Disaster (9575672). 5.55 News (9235721). To 6am.

Channel 4

- 6.00 Sesame Street (92:65). 7.00 Ovide (R) (73:455). 7.30 The Magic School Bus (R)(S) (52962). 8.00 The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (20829). 10.00 Planet Pop (27788). 10.30 Eerie, Indiana (R)(T) (74523). **11.00** Madison (S)(T) (8097). **11.30** Babylon 5 (S)(T) (8214691).
- 12.35 FILM North (1994). Precocious Eliah Wood divorces his inattentive parents in this comedy (T) (82849542).
- 2.10 Maxim Vengerov Masterclass (7470368). 3.05 The Vitage (9643639). 3.20 Tool Stories (S)(1) (7205833). 3.50 Fifteen to One Highlights (S)(T) (917/320). 4.30 Countdown (9288436). 4.55 Ricki Lake (S)(T) (7507691).
- 5.30 The Bear. Animation (1) (829).
- 6.00 Wise Up World (1) (41897).
- 7.00 The Year in 30 Seconds. Advertising creative Trevor Beattle tries to capture the essence of 1998 in a 30-second commercial (3184).
- 7.30 Vengerov: Playing by Heart. Profile of violanst Maxon Vengerov (S)(T) (53707).
- 8.30 Brookside (T) (8639).
- 9.00 Stonehenge: Secret of the Stones. First of a two-parter airs a theory that Stonehenge was the site of a symbolic sexual act between gods (1436).
- 10.00 Rising Damp (R)(T) (66504). 10,30 Eddie Izzard Glorious (6764097). 11.35 Eurotrash Jingle Bells, Jingle
- 12.05 Dead Man (1995). Johnny Depp as an Ohio clerk who finds himself out of his depth (T) (72040540).
- 2.20 Pick-Up on South Street (1953). Richard Widmark stars in this melodrama (1983382).

3.35 FILM Side Street (1949). Crisp

crime B-pic (248924).

5.10 Sharky and George (7741108). **5.35** 2 Stupid Dogs (9572585). To 6am.

Channel 5

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- 6.00 The Wind in the Willows (A) 1 ne wind ut the windows (125565165). 6.25 Roobarb (37052271). 6.30 Dappledown Farm (R) (4253368). 7.00 Wimzie's House (R) (6689455). 7.35 Mikshake! (S) (2228455). 7.35 Havakazoo (R)(S) (6963558). 8.00 George of the Jungle (R) (7294610).
- 8.30 Lassie and Neeka (1968). TV compilation (2729/523).
- 10.20 Sunset Beach (S)(T) (9693879). 11.10 Leeza (8177639). 12.00 5 News (S)(T) (7204097). **12.30** Family Attains (S)(T) (2825707). **1.00** Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (6688726), **1.30** Wowfabgroovy (2824078), **2.00** 100 Per Cent (1278558). 2.30 Good Afternoon (S) (2862233).
- 3.30 FILM Murphy's War (1971). War romp starring a brilliantly manic Peter O'Toole as a sailor who vows to settle the score with a U-boat which sank his ship (T) (1363078).
- 5.30 Name That Tune (2033184).
- 6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (2030097).
- 6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (2021349). 7.00 5 News (S)(T) (1176146).
- 7.30 Polar Odyssey (R)(S)(T) (2010233).
- 8.00 The Sweeney (T) (6264981).
- 9.00 FILM The Incident (1990). Watter Matthau's washed-out Second World War Colorado lawyer outrages locals by flushing skeletons out of closets, while detending a German prisoner who's accused of murdering the doc in the town's pow camp (T) (38321417).
- 10.50 The Jack Docherty Show (S) 2551523). 11.30 Leeza (1711436).
- 12.10 FILM in Cold Blood (1967). Stunning recreation of a shocking crime and its grim aftermath. With Robert Blake, Scott Wilson (14030856).
- 2.35 Major League Baseball Review (90386214). 4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (2016009). 5.30 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (7833818). To 6am.

3.00 Chaise Australa vs England (\$428436, 5.30 Fish TV (\$44227), 6.00 Fish TV (\$148934, 6.30 Chicae (\$255500), 10.00 Chicae Australa vs England (\$65550), 10.30 Superbouts (\$459349, 11.30 Chicae

CRESSON, 10.30 Superbouts (145903-9), 11.30 Close
UK Gold
JOB Crossropic, 65.65/11, 230 Neighbours (40,9165),
7.55 EastFrides (44,654-2), 8.30 The Bit (871-952)
8.00 The Bit (871-952), 8.30 Pinds and Prejudice
850-458; 10.30 Anges (872-758); 18.00 Dates
CRESSON, 10.30 Anges (872-758); 18.00 Dates
CRESSON, 10.00 Pinds and Prejudice (705-859);
2.00 Dates (872-858); 10.00 Pinds (873-859);
2.00 Research (872-858); 10.00 Dates
Research (872-858); 10.00 Pinds (873-858);
2.25 Fee Demonstry (873-858);
2.26 See Dates (873-858);
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2.20 See Office (8

Paramount Comedy Channel
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11.30 Lary Sartes Snot (8078, 12.00 David Letteram (6262, 1.00 Tex 65721, 1.30 The Chic gaines),
2.00 Dr Kat (3501), 2.30 Sopt (2281, 3.00 Hoperman 55563, 3.30 Nightsand (6596), 4.00 Close

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 1627,199-3, 8.60 You've Been Framed (1050-4), 6.40
 Scotland Today and Scotland Neutrer (RTS91), 7.45
 A Parry Philosof Broadcast by the Scotland Neutrer
 Parry (FRESE), 7.40 Machiner (RTS90), 18.00
 Neuts, Weather (RESE(3), 11.55 Fim Carry Cru up
 the Aurige (SEZSQ, 1.00 Fim Sureed Beel
 600.03, 2.45 Film Child in the Night (21491),
 4.25 North Pariget (SEOSSS), 4.55 Scotland
 Boday (SEZS000), 8.20 Emmerciale (3467199).
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 Next Time I (16950) 7.40 Sex Toks (169500)
- Tyme Tees
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 Headines (544363) 3.50 North East News
 (673894, 6.50 North East Tongen (705403, 7.40
 The Time of Our Lives (765300).

THE WRITER Minette Walters is fascinated the garage of her Docklands dwelling.

BBC2

8.35 Anchors Aweigh (1945). Frank Shatra and Gene Kely kick up

(R)(S)(T) (50453108). 1.50 Rex the Runt

(S)(T) (50442092), **2.00** The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (94127).

5.50 Poppea. Continuing Monteverdis opera

about intrigue and sexual politics in Emperor Nero's court (S) (949189).

745 Star Trek: The Next Generation.

8.00 Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Opener for a comic-chiler based on the film of

the same name (S)(T) (1901214).

Cornedy pop quiz (S)(T) (830295).

Albert Finney and Tom Courtenay play

tricky start, become friendly enough. Then comes trouble in the shape of

Joanna Lumley (S)(T) (469092).

12.00 IIII Some Came Running (1958). Frank Shatra plays a fledging writer returning to his roots in this justrous, soap (1) (93290883). To 2:15am.

11.55 Perfectly Frank (S)(T) (182450).

men whose wives die on the same night.

They decide to live together and, after a

9.25 Rex the Runt (S)(T) (952363).

9.35 Never Mind the Buzzcocks.

10.15 A Rather English Marriage.

Sci-fi drama series (R)(S)(T) (517924).

6.30 The Simpsons (S)(T) (909856).

3.00 Perfectly Frank (8439837). 3.05 Shooting the Century (S)(T) (2960498). 3.55 Perfectly Frank (S)(T) (9604905).

their heels (T) (83255634).

Sky Premier TUESDAY CHOICE

by the idea of control. "Most of us can control things like anger and jealousy," she says, "but... it is the composed, controlled people who, if you scratch the surface, have torrential rivers running underneath." Walters examines these themes in The Echo (9pm BBC1, left), the latest drama culled from her novels. Joely Richardson plays a well-to-do woman who arouses the suspicions of a journalist (Clive Owen) when the body of a tramp is discovered in

- Sky Movie Max

 a.00 for School Fac Livers (2073) (2629, 7.30 Al

 to Winer That Have Been 1937) (1670494) \$45 Vega
 Veccinn (1937) #445271, 14.00 The Judge Steps Out
 (1945) \$7707, 4.00 No Mey Beard (1997) \$500 Eut
 (1945) \$7707, 4.00 No Mey Beard (1997) \$500 Al

 for Between Fac Lovers (579) \$7908, 7.00 Al

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 Dead and Loving 1 (1995) \$6501, 9.00 Love and Other
 Cassaroptos (1995) \$7908, 7.00 Love and Other
 Cassaroptos (1995) \$7908, 12.00 Love and

 14.00 Berdello of Boog (1998) \$7809, 12.00 Her

 Deady Rev (1995) \$7909, 2.05 Flastpoor (1997)
 (20195) \$3.40 Decy Nine Seconds (1997) \$18949000)

 Elst Change (1995)

Saty Premisery 4.00 Tom and Huck (1995) (58455) 8.00 If Be Home for Creatmas (1998) (6425) 10.00 The Thing You Dol (1996) 57568 2.200 The Angle of Persystems Assus (1996) (77842 2.00 If Be Home for Creatmas (1996) 67544 2.00 If Be Home for Creatmas (1996) 67540 4.00 Tom and Fund (1995) (5823) 6.00 That Thing You Lot (1996) (7647) 8.00 Danues Peak (1997) (7942) 8.000 Erases (1997) 67952 8.000 Erase (1997) Fire Collegence of Elaste (1996) (1997) (1

54.9 Cincerns 154.9 (20145), 8.00 The Big Sky Cincerns 154.9 (20145), 8.00 The Big Sky 1652 (60145), 8.00 The Big Sky 1652 (60145), 8.00 The Grape 1852 (2022788, 8.00 The Workwood Hail of Famer 1853568, 9.00 Femery 1879, 645259, 91.95 Next Skep Gradmach Winge 1879, 662591, 1.55 Next Skep Gradmach Winge 1879, 662591, 1.55 Next Skep Gradmach Winge 1879, 662501, 1.55 Next Skep 16944 (6055016), 3.20 The Directors 692468, 4.20 Sproutul Jones (649), \$300.877), \$.45 Closs.

SATELLITE & CABLE R083963 B.20 Reong News (2007h) B.00 Aeroboo - Oz Syre (47559 S.20 literator North Football (2027h) 15.00 kinntor (2027h) 15.00 kin

6.00 Sesame Street (53943). 7.00 Ovide

10.00 Saved by the Bell (R)(S)(T)

(R) (27943). **7.30** The Magic School Bus (S) (99950). **8.00** Big Breakfast (55479).

(88566). **10.30** Eerie, Indiana (R) (35301). **11.00** Madison (S) (7214). **11.30** Babylon 5 (T) (44653). **12.30** Blabbermouth and

Sticky Beak (T) (4222011), 1.35 Blinkey Can't Fly (45882818), 1.50 Summit Fever

(1500045). **3.50** Fifteen to One Highlights (S)(T) (9148092). **4.30** Countdown (T) (9255108). **4.55** Ricki Lake (T) (7574363).

(R) (7753160). 2.50 Wine Hunt (T)

6.00 Riverdance: a Journey. The story of the irish dance group (R)(S)(T) (60585).

7.00 Gilli Heroes of Comedy. The career of Torrary Cooper. See Choice, below (R)(T) (70769).

called Here, which somebody wants to sell off to make way for a prison (357547).

10.45 Friends at Christmas. Rachel quits

11.50 **Film** Benny and Joon (1993).

11.20 What's Eating Johnny Depp? Profile

of the idiosyncratic movie star (347905).

Wistful romance with Johnny Depp and Mary Stuart Masterson (S)(I) (422856).

1.40 Film Alive and Kicking (1996).

Jason Flemyng plays a ballet dancer in a company decimated by Aids (800238).

3.30 Film Where the Sidewalk Ends

(1950). Hot-headed cop Dana Andrews talls for Gene Tlerney, estranged wife of a robbery suspect (499493).

4126585), 3.20 Tool Stories (T)

5.30 Garden Doctors (1) (450).

8.30 Brookside (S)(T) (9214)

9.00 Stonehenge: Secret of the Stones. Continuing the two-part

documentary (T) (3363).

her job (S)(T) (156030).

Figur Four 8.00 Rase the Red Lanson (1991) (7900600), 8.005 First Green Tomates at the Whate Stop Cate (1991) 60040504, 10.15 Crote of Finants (1995), (1995)04, 12.00 Party Gri (1995) (1002776), 1.400 L.23 Seductor (1994) (19460535, 3.300 Joy Luck Club (1995) (1957/1)

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Sky Sports 3 8.00 Croker (859/873) 10.00 Croker (859-873) 10.30 Cricker South Africa vs West Indian 580/6747)

- Channel 5 6.00 Wind in the Willows (R) (25532837). 6.25 Roobarb (R) (37029943). 6.30 Dappledown Farm (R) (4213740), 7.00 Wirrizie's House (R) (6656127). 7.30 Milkshakel (S) (2295127), 7.35 Havakazoo (R)(S) (6850030), 8.00 George of the Jungle (R) (7261382).
- 8.30 Lassie: the Adventures of Neeka (1971), Shaggy-dog story taken from the TV series (95122214).
- 9.50 My Story (6791301), 10.20 Sunset Beach (S)(T) (7493491). **11.10** Leeze (R)(S) (8137011). **12.00** 5 News (T) (7271769). **12.30** Family Affairs (R)(S)(T) (2892479). 1.00 Bold and the Beautifu (1) (6655498). 1.30 Wowfabgroovy (2884450). 2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (1165030). 2.30 Good
- 3.30 Film Damn the Defiant! (1962). Capt Alec Guinness is not best served by sadistic Lt Dirk Bogarde in this well-acted
- take of an 18th-century mutiny (4739585).

Afternoon (S) (2839905).

- 5.25 Postcards (R) (34303769). 5.30 Name That Tune 2000856).
- 6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (2007769).
- 6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (2081721).
- 7.00 5 News (S)(T) (1143818). 7.30 Best of Pensi (S) (2087905).
- 8.00 Storm Warning (R)(T) (6231653).
- 9.00 Beyond the Call (1996).
 A man on death row is visited by his childhood sweetheart (38312769).
- 10.55 Jack Docherty Show (2527566), 11.35 Compromising Situations (7885905).
- 12:10 Cherry, Harry and Raquel (1969). Clod-hopping comedy from mammary man Russ Meyer (54605899).
- the Year (12250528), 4.40 Club Class (R)(S) (81231783). **5.05** Move On Up (R)(S) (19901054). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (7893290). To 6am.

SATELLITE & CABLE

5.15 Super Dave (R) (2456054), **5.36** 2 Stupid Dogs (R)(S) (4355388), **5.55** Sesame Street (9719509). To 7am.

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Crosus (28529672), 8.00 Cricket (79656383), 10.30 Sky Sports Classics (14850721), 11.30 Close

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 18.50 Street Steels (B66507-59). 11.35 Fam Astery Concess Americal (197207). 11.35 Fam Astery Concess (197207). 24.55 Fam An American 19.4 Few Most (197207). 2.35 Fam An American 19.4 Few Most (197207). 2.30 Martine with Chibren (197207). 2.30 Ten Challess (19770504). 2.35 Sen Con (197207). 2.30 Ten Challess (19770504). 2.35 Sen Con (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (19770504). 2.35 Sen Con (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (19770504). 2.35 Sen Control (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (19770504). 2.35 Sen Control (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (19770504). 2.35 Sen Control (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (19770504). 2.35 Sentended (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (197207). 2.30 Sentended (19720604). 2.35 Sentended (197207). 2.30 Judicialer (197207). 2.30 Sentended (197207). 2
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WEDNESDAY TELEVISION Channel 4

- BBC1 7.00 News (1) (1899473). 7.10 Greedysaurus and the Gang (R) (6761547). 7.15 Teletubbies (S) (5762189). 7.40 Yogi's Treasure Hunt (R) (1607276). **8.00** Blue Peter - the Best Bits (S) (T) (6460189). **8.35** Taz-Mania (8072498). **9.00** Sweet Valley High (R)(S) (7547092). **9.25** The Fame Game (R)(S)(T) (7557479). **9.55** Teletubbies (S) (9711479). **10.20** News;
- 10.30 The Barefoot Executive (1971). Chimpanzee dictates TV tastes in Disney farce (T) (35550045).
- 12.05 Wipeout (9740653). 12.30 Laughing for Ages (S) (69856). 1.00 News (21230) 1.15 Neighbours (S)(T) (58608160). 1.40 Battersea Dogs' Home (S)(T) (97898295). 240 20000 Leagues under the Sea
- (S)(T) (7143585). 3.40 The World's Strongest Man (S)(T) (1576295). 4.10 The Great Outdoors
- (1988). Amiable oaf John Candy is riled by relative Dan Aykroyd (S)(T) (4588059).
- Newsround Review of the Year (332818). 6.00 Neighbours (649011). 6.25 News; Weather (T) (746498). 6.45
- Regional News (T) (302363). 6.55 Only Fools and Horses. Conclusion of the 1991 special (R)(S)(T) (6026634).
- 8.20 A Question of Sport (S)(1) (527030). 8.50 The National Lottery: Amazing
- Luck Stories (S)(T) (674672). 9.00 The Echo. Conclusion of the seasonal mystery drama (S)(T) (7343030).
- 10.15 News; Weather (1) (719092). 10.45 Review of the Year (S)(T) (9732905).
- 2.00 Faces Of Islam (S)(T) (8804431). 12.20 42 Up (R)(S)(T) (2035561).
- 1.35 They Might Be Giants (1971). Lawyer George C Scott is sure he is Sherlock Holmes (T) (6688412). 3.00 News 24 (1635967). To 7am.

- E.

WEDNESDAY CHOICE

WARREN BEATTY discusses his latest landed film, Bulworth - which underlines his lifelong fascination with politics
in The South Bank Show (11.10pm
HTV). This is followed by a screening of his impressive gangster movie, Bugsy (12.10am ITV). Tommy Cooper (left) was not as gorgeous as Beatty, but in Britain he was even more popular. He is profiled in Heroes of Comedy (7pm C4), which includes interviews with fans such as Anthony Hopkins, Bob Monkhouse and Eric Sykes.

ITV Granada

tures (R)(S)(T) (7933450).

- 6.00 GMTV (1738769), 9.25 News (T) 6.35 The Great Dictator (1940). (4062450). 9.35 Tiny Toon Adventures Chaplin's audacious swipe at Hitler in a fearless tragi-comedy (1) (7/493011). R)(S)(T) (5472837). 10.10 Brilliant
- 10.35 The Shaggy Dog (1994). TV remake of Disney's old slapstick standby 10.50 Perfectly Frank (#133479). 10.55 The West (S)(T) (5971059). 12.20 Classics for Kids (S)(T) (1757856). 1.10 Cricket - the Ashes (S) (58620382). 1.40 Rex the Runt
 - **12.20 Granada News** (T) (6403011), **12.30** News; Weather (T) (54924), **1.00** Emmerdale (R)(S)(T) (28672). 1.30 My Girl (1991). Tacky growing-pains anecdote (S)(T) (57559295).
 - 3.25 Cartoon (8445498), 3.30 News -leadlines (T) (3588160).
- 4.00 Assault on a Queen (1966). Frank Sinatra vehicle about a gang of crooks who attempt a helst on the Queen Mary by submarine (T) (84786653). 3.40 Fill tron Will (1994). Mackenzie Austin stars in this yarn (S)(T) (859634). 5.40 News; Weather (1) (517672).

7.00 Emmerdale (S)(T) (2419).

- 5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (8876382).
- 7.30 Coronation Street (T) (585). 8.00 Till The Three Musketeers (1993). Chris O'Donnell stars in this
- 10.00 Babes in the Wood. A festive edition of the cornedy (S)(T) (359905).

version of the Dumas book (S)(1) (9301).

- 10.45 News; Weather. (1) (980634), 11.00 Granada News (T) (896856). **H40 **CHOICE The South Bank Show. Warren Beatty interview. See Choice, below (S)(T) (269671).
- 12:10 Bugsy (1991). Biopic of the Las Vegas hoodium, starring Warren Beatty and Harvey Keitel (T) (35382509).
- 2.45 No Secrets (1982). An African nation holds America to ransom (866615). ndtrax (25431509). 4.35 Cybernet (S) (46842431), **5.05** Hurricanes (S)(T) (7713325), **5.30** Bugs Bunny (9542344).

5.55 News (9202493). To 6am.

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1998) (194409); 12.05 Calm at Surset (1998)
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BBC1

6.00 Cartoon (4033379), 6.25 Film: Jacob (7766263). 7.55 Touched by an Angel (7283669). 9.25 News (4155114). 9.30 The Heaven and Earth Show (22911). 10.30 The Life of Birds (7391355). 11.20 World Cup '98 Review (4011737). 12.20 Laughing for Ages (9814282). 12.50 News; Weather (21206669). 12.55 EastEnders (42932379).

2.45 The Wizard of Oz (Victor Fleming 1939 US). Judy Garland classic (26975669).

4.25 EastEnders (3140737). 5.20 News; Weather (2976379). 5.35 Local News: Weather (963282).

5.40 Songs of Praise. Daniel O'Donnell in concert at Wembley Arena (S) (T)

6.15 Antiques Roadshow - the Next Generation. A look at the collecting passions of the younger generation (S) (T) (167737).

7.00 in Love with Elizabeth: the Early Life of the Queen Mother. Documents the childhood and early life of the "nation's favourite creat-grandmother". Elizabeth, the Queen Mother (S) (T) (9602).

8.00 This Is Your Life. Michael Aspel takes a walk down Coronation Street to surprise one of the cast members (S) (T) (189805).

8.40 CHOICE Mrs Brown (John Madden 1997 UK), Judi Dench's Queen Victoria finds solace with Billy Connolly's Scottish groom. See Film of the Day, below (S) (T) (26103060).

10.20 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (583621).

9

10.35 Heartburn Hotel. The sitcom set in a rundown Birmingham hotel starring Tim Healey (S) (T) (688176).

11.05 Alf Garnett: in Sickness and in Health (R) (T) (944911). 11.35 The Big End (S) (T) (359089).

12.05 The Sting (George Roy Hill 1973 US). Butch Cassidy co-stars Paul Newman and Robert Redford reform for a Depression era gambling scam (Then Weather) (T) (48074206).

BBC2

6.00 Bump's Christmas Story (5005398). 7.40 Teletubbies (8059485). 8.20 Wizard of Oz (3909466), 8.40 Fievel's American Tails (8139737), 9.05 Queen's Nose (8609973), 9.35 Wayne Manifesto (1700466), 10.05 Film: The Midas Touch (1476089), 11.20 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (4019379). 12.20 Cricket (9812824).

12.50 Gue Vadis? (Mervyn Lefloy 1951 US). Roman epic with Robert Taylor (T) (64793114).

3.35 Choir of the Year (6949534). **4.25** Simon Rattle (S) (3157027). **5.15** The Car Show (6352008).

8.05 Rex the Runt (S) (T) (690824).

6.15 Star Trek: Voyagen Janeway asks Seven of Nine to become part of the crew, but she is determined to return to the Borg (S) (T) (165379).

7.00 Ray Mears's World of Survival Our man joins the Aboriginal people of Australia (S) (T) (6398).

7.30 The Car's the Star. Quentin Willson on the Lada (S) (T) (986076).

7.50 Earth Story. Aubrey Marring sets out to discover why, unlike our planetary neighbours, the Earth is a living planet (S) (T) (407553).

8.40 Xmas Shooting Stars, Last year's, in fact. Guests are Nell Morrissey, Anna Friel, Alvin Stardust and Clive Mantle (R) (S) (T) (692089).

9.20 CHOICE Ted and Raiph. Paul Whitehouse and Charlie Higson expand on their popular Fest Show characters. See Comedy of the Day, below (S) (T) (3549602).

10.30 Merry Mind the Buzzcocks. Cornedy pop quiz with Boy George, Noddy Holder, Jonathan Ross and Louise Wener from Sleeper (R) (S) (T) (478843).

11.10 Arena: I Shot Andy Warhol (Mary Harron 1997 US), The story of Valerie Solanas, founder and sole member of SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men), who shot artist Andy Warhol in his New York offices in 1968. Lili Taylor stars (S) (961)14).

12.45 Andrea Bocelli: a Night in Tuscany (S) (723206). To 1.45am.

ITV LWT

6.00 GMTV (87553), 8.00 Diggit (3592244). 9.25 Old Bear (7604331). 9.55 Mole's Christmas (1792447), 10.25 Percy the Park Keeper (1221973), 11.00 Momino Worship (47640). 12.00 Back to Bethlehem (28843), 12,30 Crosstalk (51669), 1.00 News (21394992), 1.15 New Labour in Focus (451379). 245 F1 Special (435331).

3.15 Garry On Jack (Gerald Thomas 1963 UK). Comedy with Bernard Cribbins (301195).

4.45 Local News (6569602). 4.55 News (6598114). 5.05 The Crazy World of Joe Pasquale (6484027).

5.35 Elli Dumbo (Ben Sharpsteen 1941 US). Disney's classic animated film about the big-eared elephant (T)

6.45 Kids Say the Funniest Things. Michael Barrymore orchestrates this laugh at children (S) (T) (572805).

7.30 Coronation Street. As Alec mulis over his future, Natalie makes an amazing offer (T) (466).

8.00 You've Been Framed! Usa Rilev presents more mishaps caught on viewers' home videos (S) (838669).

8.45 CHOCE Cider with Rosie. Dramatisation by John Mortimer of Laurie Lee's account of growing up in a remote Cotswold village in the 1920s. See Drama of the Day, below (S) (T) (692244).

10.45 Christmas at St Albion's (830244).

10.55 ITN News; Weather (T) (585282).

11.10 You're Only Human with Jeff Green (T) (938350). 11.40 Film: Deliver Them from Evil: The Taking of Alta View (110553), 1.30 Box Office America Christmas Special (76935). 2.30 MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (R) (7595954). 3.55 The Making of Slipstream (99277935). 4.25 Cybernet (R) (18432041). To 455am.

Channel 4

6.05 Dumb and Dumber (4018060). 6.30 Camberwick Green (4518089). 6.50 Frootie Tooties (8948737), 6.55 Dog City (8148992), 7.25 Jingle Bell Rock (9616805), 8.00 T4 (4650331). 8.20 Johnny Bravo (7101756). 8.50 Sister Sister (31576282). 10.50 Planet Pop (1691282), 12.00 Hollycaks (26485). 12.30 Late Lunch (439195). 1.35 Waltons (8258805). 2.35 Blue Christmas (6043282). 2.50 Heron and the Crane (1302008).

3.00 Helio Dolly (Gene Kelly 1969 US). Musical with Barbra Streisand and Walter Matthau (1)

5.40 The Mini Job - the Making of the Italian Job. Looks at the cutt 1969 movie (644244).

6.10 Mini Man. Portrait of Sir Alec issigonis, the man responsible for the design of the Mini and the Morris Minor (T) (812640).

7:10 Mini Years. Russell Bulgin pays homage to the Mini, with fellow enthusiasts rally star Timo Makinene and actress Jenny Agutter (274195).

7.40 Arthouse. Looks at how the anniversary of the painting of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece The Last Supper, will not be a cause for celebration because restoration has diminished the original (T) (345973).

8.40 Edward Scissorhands (Tim Burton 1990 US), Poignant satirical fantasy about a boy with sharp metal shears for hands, who is the creation of an inventor who dies before finishing his work. The boy's years of isolation in a Gothic castle are ended when a kindly Avon saleswoman takes him into her home in the pastel-coloured suburbs below. With Johnny Depp as the sharpfingered lad and Winona Ryder as the gal that loves him (T) (42594814).

10.35 Johnny Vegas Television Show. The highly rated satirist from St Helens - a Perrier runner-up this year - gets his first TV exposure (453534).

11.20 The Horseman on the Roof (Jean-Paul Rappeneau 1995 Fr). Lavish historical romance set in Provence during the 19th century. Juliette Binoche stars (50898008)

1.50 Terry Pratchett's Discworld (R) (9316312). To 2.15am.

Channel 5

6.00 Mixing It (7905089). 6.30 Havakazoo (4382824), 7.00 Dappledown Farm (6718911). **7.30** Mikshakel (2357911). 7.35 Warzie's House (6929114). 8.00 Do You Believe In? (7330466). 8.30 Reveletion Game (7339737). 9.00 Stickin' Around (7320089). 9.30 Fort Boyard (9175992), 10.30 Sister Said (7319973), **11.00** Daria (8551756). 11.30 Singled Out (8552485). 12.00 Biork (7333553). 12.30 Eco Warriors (2954263), 1.00 Gods of Olympus (52841440), 110 5 News (89977379). 1.20 Lynx Location Apollo (1620534). 2.20 Movie Chart Show (32242282). 2.30 Family Affairs (42994440).

5:10 Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (Mel Damski 1989 US). Keshia Knight Puliman from The Cosby Show stars in this remake of the Bing Crosby musical based on the Mark Twain story. A 10-year-old Connecticut schoolgirl is knocked unconscious and wakes up in the Court of King Arthur (39794379).

7.00 From Jesus to Christ. Terry Waite presents a new documentary series about the rise of Christianity. Recent archaeological finds and fresh historical interpretations challenge previous ideas about Jesus and the first Christians (S) (6391089).

8.00 Paradise in Peril. The Galapagos Islands have more endemic species and sub-species of seableds than any other tropical island group. More than any other Galapagos wildlife, these birds are affected by the ocean current (S) (T) (6300737).

9.00 FILM Tricks (Kenneth Fink 1997 US). Mimi Flogers plays a single mother, working as a hooker in Las Vegas to pay her way through college, who gets badly beaten by a client. Tyne Daily also stars in this melodrama (S) (T) (38450973).

10.50 The Real Monty. Documentary looking at the lives and work of a group of male strippers from Yorkshire (R) (S) (T) (5679305).

11.50 The Comedy Store (5773756). 12.20 Open Mic Awards 1998 (R) (2174461). 1.20 NFL American Football Review (85052461). 4.40 Tibs and Fibs (R) (81300867). To 505am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia
As LWT except: 12.30 Ref: 3
of the Year (51669), 3.15 Corollatin
Street (30195), 4.45 Anglia News
(5569602), 2.30 MTV Awards 98
(31799), 4.00 The Making of
Silpstream (16732), 4.30 Cybernet
(71664), 5.00 The Making of What
Dreams May Come (7863138), 5.25
Compation Street (7891157). Coronation Street (7891157). Central

Coronation Street (109/15/7)
Central
As LWT except: 12.30
Dinosaurs (4366669). 12.55
Central News (21290008). 3.15
Coronation Street (301193). 4.45
Central News and Sport (6569602).
HTV Wales
As LWT except: 12.00 Back to Bethleham (9805534). 12.25
Soccer (9808621). 12.55 HTV
News (21290008). 3.15 Front Row (464843). 4.15 Movies, Games and (videos (477282). 4.45 HTV News (6569602). 2.30 - 5.25 As Angla.
HTV Wales except: 12.25
West Match Plus (9808621). 3.15
Hollywood's Greatest Sturits (484843).
Meridian
As LWT except: 12.30 7 Days

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Meridian
As LWT except: 12.30 7 Days
(2257805). 12.50 Meridian News
and Weather (73659263). 3.15
Coronation Street (30185). 4.45
Meridian News (6569602). 2.30
Special (789157).
Westcountry
As LWT expent: 12.30

Westcollattry
As LWT except: 12.30
Westcountry Weekend Match
(5:689), 3.15 Emmerdale (30:195),
4.45 Westcountry News
(5:69602), 2.30 - 5.25 As Anglia:
Yorkshire
As LWT except: 12.30 Goals
on Sunday (5:669), 3.15 Coronation
Street (30:195), 4.45 Calendar
News and Sport (6:59602).
Tyne Tees
As Yorkshire except: 12.30
Daity Duck (5:669), 4.45 North
East News and Sport (6:569602).
S4C
As Channel 4 except: 12.30

S4C
As Channel 4 except: 12.30
Planed Plant (76080737). 1.50 Gol
(78485027). 2.35 Brookside
(63005843). 4.30 Famous Fred
(10647718). 5.30 Gwneud Gogs
(1010961). 5.55 Gogwana
(29944331). 6.30 Pobol y Cwm
(40637963). 7.30 Dechrau Canu
Dechrau Carmol (1042911). 8.00
Cefin Gwlad (21448485). 9.00 Y
Palmant Aur (3296162). 10.05
Newyddion (35348843). 10.15 Fim:
Don Juan DeMarco (26224737).
12.00 Film: The Horseman on the
Roof (73873751). 2.30 Close.
RTE1

Roof (73873751). 2-30 Close. RTE1
6.35 Film: A Good Man in Africa (37504008). 8.05 Film: Money From Home (4747398). 9.50 Would fou Believe (85042621). 10.20 Toy Stories (94589805). 11.10 Service (13509447). 11.55 Pink Partiter (13509447). 11.55 Pink Partiter (13509447). 11.55 Pink: The Greatest Story Ever Told (96443008). 3.55 Film: ET the Extra-Terrestrial (18554824). 6.00 The Angelus (37410060). 6.01 Six-One News (20770992). 6.20 HeartBeat (11098640). 7.25 Coronation Street (2017/692), 6-20 Flearingar (1998640), 7.25 Coronation Street (19483973), 7.55 Glennoe (93901701), 8.25 Film: Ace Ventura; When Nature Calls (83056640), 10.25 News (8210800), 10.45 Alchel Reco Briss Consess 10.25 News (82108060). 10.45 Nobel Peace Prize Concert (66647447). 12.15 News (69300886). 12.20 Film: Guys and Dolls (45089577). 3.05 Film: The Fighting Kentuckian* (64795770). 4.40 Film: Father Goose (73753003). Network. 2 6.00 Sesame Street (40267396**. 7.00 The Blobs (61671973). 7.40 Senamas (61600485). 7.20 Addams Fartily (37680331). 7.45 Country Mouse (22225629). 8.15 Darkwing Duck (63414640). 8.40 Fudge

Mouse (2223023), aug Dennymy
Duck (6841640), 8.40 Fudge
(31872379), 9.05 Pinky (27608282),
9.30 Disney Club (66013466),
11.30 2TV (1019447), 1.15 Racing
(53025602), 3.25 The Movie Show
(81970843), 4.35 Pink Parnther
(4121350), 5.00 Nucht (76736640),
5.05 Feir City (60441640), 6.05
Film: Annie (45195398), 8.25 News;
Simpsons (85354379), 8.55 Global
Gathering (10932485), 10.5 Film:
Much Ado about Nothing
(87615992), 12.45 Brittas Enighe
(81457645), 1.20 Top 30 Hits
(81467022), 2.20 The Smashing
Pumpkins - the Concert (33070393),
3.30 Jobfinder 98 (97086138).

COMEDY OF THE DAY

TED AND RALPH (920pm B8C2) At 50 minutes, one might have suspected Paul Whitehouse and Charlie Higson of stretching their Fast Show characters way too far beyond the limits of their sketchy existence. Both are very good actors, however, and this is a treat. Higson is the lonely aristocrat, hopelessly in love with his Irish groundsman. Very funny, and surprisingly touching.



RADIO

5.40 Victoriana. 5.54 Shipping Forecast. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News.

6.15 Pick of the Year. 7.00 News; The Archers.

745 Room for Improve-ment. Laurie Taylor and guests explore the art of self-Improvement, from mastering a language or appreciating music to

DRAMA OF THE DAY

CIDER WITH ROSIE (8.45pm ITV) Juliet Stevenson is annoyingly confined to her mannerisms as the mother of Laurie Lee in this slightly chocolate-boxy version of Lee's much-loved memoirs of his Gloucestershire childhood. John Mortimer's adaptation is given a more bracing edge by the narrating voice of the real Laurie Lee, but, on the whole, this production disappoints.



FILM OF THE DAY

MRS BROWN (8.40pm BBC1) Judi Dench and, perhaps more surprisingly, Billy Connolly are superb as Queen Victoria and devoted Scottish groom, John Brown, in this fine costume drama. Nicknamed the "widow of Windsor" for her long-standing grief over the death of Albert, Victoria is slowly coaxed back to the land of the living by the only person willing to treat her as a human being.



American Football (934t1485). 9.00 Squash (65092485). 10.00 Scottish

Football Dundee v Celtic (56548669). 11.30 H2O (65229350). 12.00 Close.

7.30 Xtrem Sports: Yoz Action (30992), 8.30

Snowboarding (29718).

9.00 Alpine Sking (96027).

10.00 Ski Jumping (89485). 11.30 Alpine Sking (966808).

12.45 Sumo (539756).

14.45 Edustrianism

1.45 Equestrianism (64175466). 4.00 Dancin

(54175465). 4.00 Dancing (26447). 5.00 Alpine Sking (6669485). 5.45 Cross-Country Sking (97323621). 8.30 Bloopers (7331). 9.00 Boxing (71485). 10.00 Boxing (41244). 11.00 Clympic Games (10843). 1.00 Closs.

UK Gold

Eurosport

SATELLITE & CABLE South Africa v West Indies (98190973). 3.00 Cricket Australia v England (54310992). 5.30 NFL

Radio 1 (976-998MHz FM) 5.30 Radio 1 Review the Year. 10.00 Mark Gooder's Radio 1 Request Show, 1.00 Lisa l'Anson, 3.00 Top of the Pops. **4.00** The Official UK Top 40. **7.00** Radio 1s Dance Anthems with Dave Pearce. 10.00 Trevor Nelson. 12.00 Emma 8. 4.00 - 7.00 Cive

(88-90.2MHz FM) (88-90.2MHz FM)
7.00 Don Maclean, 9.05
Steve Wright's Sunday
Love Songs, 11.00
Parkinson's Sunday
Supplement, 1.00
Desmond Carrington,
3.00 Frank Sinatra; the
Volca of the Century,
4.00 Sing Something
Seasonal, 5.00 Starring
Julie, 6.00 Pam Aures Julie. 6.00 Pam Ayres the Pick of 98. 7.00 Michael Ball and Lesley Garrett in Concert. 8.30 Sunday Hali Hour. 9.00 Alan Keith. 10.00 Malcolm Laycock. 11.00 The David Jacobs Collection. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Nicky Horne. Radio 3 (902-924MHz FM.) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Brian Kay's Sunday

Morning. 11.00 Artist of the Week. 12.45 Bells upon Bells. 3.00 Spirit of the Age 4.00 100 Great Singers. 4.15 Centurions. 5.45 Sunday Feature: Shakespeare 2000. 6.30 Private Passions. 7.30 Choir Works, Brian Kay introduces Handel's ss*iah* in a performance recorded last Christmas at St Davids Hall in Cardiff. Hillevi

Martinpelto (soprano), Robin Blaze

Mark Ainsley (tenor).

John Tomfinson (bass), BBC National Chorus and Orchestra of Wales/Nicholas Kraemer. 10.00 Sunday Play: Cadenza. By David Pownall. Alessandro Stratella thoustra Pownall. Alessandro
Stradella, though a
musical genius, is banished by Pope Innocent
XI for his notorious
philandering. But it is
only after he has
crossed the Doge of
Venice that he finds his
music may be the only music may be the only thing between him and a bloody end. With Michael Maloney Joss Ackland, Eleanor Bron, Richard Griffiths, Jonathan Coy, Tom Wett, Gavin Mulr and Abigail Docherty, (R) 11.15 World Music. 11.45 The Harmonic Series Series. 12.00 BBC Symphony Orchestra. 1.00 - 6.00 Through Radio 4 (924-946MHz FM) 6.00 News Briefing. 6.05 Something Understood.

Choerstood.
6.35 On Your Farm.
6.57 Weather.
7.00 News.
7.05 Sunday Papers.
7.10 Sunday.
7.55 Radio 4 Appeal.
8.00 News. 8.00 News. 8.05 Sunday Papers. 8.07 Sunday Worship. 8.45 Letter from America.
9.00 News;
Broadcasting House.
10.00 The Archers.
11.15 Desert Island

12.00 News; Itchy Feet. 12.30 I'm Sorry I' Haven't a Clue. 12.58 Weather. 1.00 The World This Weekend. 1.30 Top Brain 1998. 2.00 Gardeners Question Time Christmas

sharpening conversation-al skills. 8.00 The Penthouse Apartment. By William Trevor, dramatised by Michael Bakewell. A stry spinster leads a quiet life until she is invited to visit the opulent home of one of her neighbours. With Dorothy Tutin, Bryan Pringle and Ada Russo. Director Enyd Williams. (R) 8.30 Word of Mouth's Festive Phrasebook. Michael Rosen unwraps a special Christmas edition of the programme about the way we speak and the words we use. 9.00 News; The Beat Documentary series about the work of community police officers in west yorkshire. This pro-gramme focuses on the gramme focuses on the case of a pregnant woman trying to escape her violent husband. (R) 9.30 Analysis. Buy Now, Pay Later. Andrew Dinot asks how far we can really afford the debts we lever and whether we we incur and whether we are storing up trouble for the future. **10.00 News; The** Westminster Hour, With David Jordan. Including 10.45 Parliamentary man talks to parliamentarians around the world. 2: A View from a Broad. Even though Britain now has more women in Parliament than ever Special 3.00 The Classic Serial: before, other countries are doing much better. Bleak House.
4.00 News; Open Book.
4.30 Poetry Please.
5.00 News; A Mission to We hear from prominent

women MPs from 11.00 News; Hidden Treesures. This week the antiques quiz comes from Castle Howard in North Yorkshire, where North Tolkship, Misson Lars Tharp quizzes panellists including Hilary Kay and Penny Brittain. 11.30 Something Understood. 12.00 News 12.15 Experimental Feature: Great Skies 12.30 The Late Story:

12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Radio 4 LW

(198kHz) 12.00 - 12.04 News: Shipping, 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special Radio 5 Live (693, 909kHz MW) 7.00 Breakfast with Andrew Neil 9.00 SportsWeek.
10.00 Hayes on Sunday.
12.00 Parris on TV.
12.30 The Media Show.
1.00 Sunday Sport
Review of the Year. 6.00 The Scottish Premier League, 8.00 News Extra. Susan Bookbinder with the news and business round-up. 8.30 Time of My Life. Michael Thomas recalls May 1989 and the lastminute goal which gave Arsenal the champlonship by the narrowest

of margins. **9.00** Dallyn Worldwide.

Richard Dallyn with the stories that matter from

around the world. 9.30 Out This Week. A

special seasonal edition of the lesbian and gay

10.00 20th-Century Vox - Britain and the Sea. Sybil Ruscoe explores the relationship between the British and the sea. 11.00 Late Night Currie. Edwina Currie gets behind the public image of a celebrity of a celebrity.

1.00 Up All Night.

4.00 Extra Time. (R)

5.00 - 7.00 The Best of Ruscoe and Co. (R) Classic FM 2.00 Alan Mann afte

(1000-1019MHz FM) 6.00 Jane Markham, 9.00 Classic Romance 12.00 Mellor Moments. Christmas. 4.00 The Youth Orchestra Series 6.00 Christmas Count clow Cirismas Count down. 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 9.00 Callas Special. 11.00 Michael Mappin. 1.00 Mellor Moments. 3.00 6.00 Mark Griffiths. Virgin Radio (1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 1058MHz FM)

6.00 Mark Forrest 6.00 Mark Forrest.
10.00 Jonathan Ross.
1.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00
Janey Lee Grace / FM
only Harriet Scott from
6.45, 7.30 Harriet Scott.
10.00 James Merritt.
1.00 Richard West.
4.20 - 6.30 Jensey. 4.30 - 6.30 Jeremy Clark. World Service Radio (198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk 1.30 Pick of the World 2.00

Newsday. 2.30 Meridian (Feature). 3.00 World News. 3.05 Write On. 3.15 Sports Rounduo. 3.30 The Works, 4.00 7.00 The World Today. Talk Radio 6.00 Sally Meen. 9.00 Derek Draper and Peter Hitchens. 11.00 Russell Grant. 2.00 David Banks and Nick Ferrari 5.00 Nicky Home 8.00 Mike Allen. 1.00 - 6.00 Creatures of the Night.

Sky Premier 6.00 Femmes Fatales (38089). 6.30 Miss Evers' Boys (1997) (62843). 8.30 Homeward Bound II: Lost in San Francisco (1996) (4350). 10.30 Bogus (1996) (73195). 12.30 Holly-wood Buzz (79089). 1.00 Miss Evers' Boys (1997) (55195). 3.00 Homeward Bound II; Lost in San (55195). 3.00 Homeward Bound II: Lost in San Francisco (1996) (62282). 5.00 Bogus (1996) (67756). 7.00 Harriet the Spy (1996) (77805). 9.00 Barry Norman's Films of the Year (66076). 9.45 Evita (1996) (74484737). 12.00 Money Train (1995) (891935). LSO Outrage (1997) (3449567). 3.20 - 6.00 Of Love and Shadow (1994) (57754157). Sky Moylo May

Sky MovieMax 6.00 Buck and the Magic Bracelet (1997) (34485). 8.00 Sweet Revenge (1990) (33973). 10.00 Murder, She Wrote: South Na Sautheast (1977). Murder, She Wrote: South by Southwest (1997) (80195). 12.00 Something Borrowed. Something Blue (1997) (56834). 2.00 Buck and the Magic Bracelet (1997) (25282). 4.00 Sweet Revenge (1990) (8669). 6.00 Murder, She Wrote; South by Southwest (1997) (1278). 8.00 L'Appartement (1995) (1725). 10.00 Big Night (1995) (436718). 11.55 Movietalk (983244). 12.25 Dead Fingers (1988) (596480). 2.20 Suture* (1993) (182119). 4.00 - 6.00 The Machine (1993) (58848).

Sky Cinema 11.00 The Big Steal* (1949) (8505244) 12.30 You're Telling Me* (1934) (28400263) 1.45 Hall of Fame (2955718) 2.15 Back to Betaan* (1945) Fame (2955718), 2.15 Back to Bataan* (1945) (1945) (3235379), 3.55 The Man Who Shot Liberry Valance* (1962) (82130176), 6.00 Donovanis Reef (1963) (9646973), 8.00 McQ (1974) (9658718), 10.00 The Searchers (1956) (1948195), 12.00 The Magus (1968) (2859008), 2.00 Starl (1968) (35048848), 4.50 You're Telling Me* (1934)

(47119577). 5.55 Close. **FilmFour** George (1994) (2706/14).

3.00 Eds Next Move (1995) (2778331). 10.00 Blood Simple (1984) (424853). 11.40 Neked (1993) (42922737). 1.50 Vroom (1988) (4437751).

3.15 - 6.00 Life is Sweet room openations. (1990) (96987886)

Discovery Channel 4.00 Wings (252331) 5.00 Fightine (2048027) 5.30 Classic Trucks (8602398) 6.00 Barefoot Bushmen (7123553) 7.00 Tagantulas and the Ven-Tarantulas and their Venomous Relations (5306282). 8.00 The Unexplained -History's Mysteries (2037911), 8,30 The Unexplained - History's Mysteries (2023718), 9,00 Discovery Showcase: Pirates (5392089), 11.00 History of the Dead See Scrols (3167319), 12.00 Science Frontiers: The Ice-berg Cometh (1063867). 1.00 Justice Files (7926119), 2.00 Close.

Sky One 6.00 Hour of Power 90331) 7.00 Bump in the Night (64331). 7.30 Street Starks (83466). 8.00 Double Dragon (50466). 8.30 Tattooed Tearage Alien Fighters from Beverly Hits (89737). 9.00 The Simpsons (40089), 9.30 Count Duckula (75263), 10.00 Dream Team (72350). **1L00** World Wresting Federation Superstars (9214), 12.00 Superstars (92114), 12.4 Just Kidding (53553), 12.30 Just Kidding (86379), 1.00 The New Adventures of Superman (74534). 2.00 Baverly Hills, 90210 (42821). 3.00 Gaithyl (83718). 4.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (85553). 5.00 Star Trek: Wayager (3737). 6.00 The Simpsons (8398). 6.30 The Simpsons (2350). 7.00 King of the Hill (4486). 7.30 King of the Hill (8534). 8.00 Earth; Pinal Conflict (28379). 9.00

Busted on the Job II (31843). 10.00 The World's Dumbest Drivers II (51242). 11.00 South Park (96282). the Crypt (57393). 1.00 Manhunter (28003), 2.00 -8.00 Long Play (8712206).

Sky Sports 1
Sky Sports 1
6.00 Ford Football Special
Blackburn Rovers v Aston
Vila (42737), 7.30 Sports
Unlimited (45824), 8.30
Aerobics - Oz Style
(27350), 9.00 Superbouts
Al v Spirks (61331), 40.00
Nigel Mansel - Mansel on
Ice (12992), 11.00 Goals on
Sunday (41373), 1.00
Futbol Mundial (35224),
1.30 Superbouts Al v Futbol Mundial (35224).
1.30 Superbouts Ali v
Spinks (73282). 2.30 Nigel
Mansell - Mansell on Ice
(84089). 3.30 Goals on
Sunday (46553). 5.30
Scottish Football Dundee v
Celtic (835973). 8.30
Gillette World Sport Special
(2263). 9.00 NFL
(8879/76). 12.20 Burdey (9879076). 12.30 Rugby Union Update Saracers London Scottish (34751). 2.00 Close.

7.00 Blg Break (3367517). 7.30 Blake's Seven (1567176). 8.25 Dr Who (1567176). 8.25 Dr Who Omnibus: Invasion of the Omnibus: Invasion of the Dinosaurs (28664404). 11.30 Dallas Omnibus (60467824). 1.00 Felm: Santa Claus - the Movie (1984) (6230355). 3.00 The Bil Omnibus (68837553). 5.25 Some Mothers Do 'Ave Tem (3960331). 6.20 Dad's Army (61279992). 7.35 Orly Fools and Horses (3936379). 9.00 Ballyidssangel (3251602). 10.30 Specially Selected Carned Carrott (5473716). 11.25 Best of Live al Jongleurs (6584718). 12.30 Some Mothers Do 'Ave Tem (13686119). 1.35 Only when Sky Sports 2 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (3103634). 7.30 Futbol Mundial (3122669). 8.00 Soccer Extra (4064992). 11.00 World Darts (7038073). 9.00 Med. (7038973) 2.00 Wild Spirits (3858927), 2.30 Gillette World Sport Special (9974669), 3.00 Ford Rugby Union Saracens v London Scottish (1285331), 5.30 International Codes London Scottish (1285331). 5-30 international Cricket South Africa v West Indies (5478379). 2.00 Cricket Australia v England (7761805). 9-30 Life of the Lions (713534). 11.30 Cricket Australia v England (8835669). 2.00 Second 7.00 International Cricket

Sky Sports 3 8.00 international Cricket South Africa v West Incles (85237379), 10.00 Cricket Australia v England

Australia v England

(4598157).

(1369619), 1.35 Only when Laugh (55469732), 2.05 The Onedin Line (130519), 3.00 - 7.00 Shopping with Screenshop (2858206). Living 6.00 Tiny Living (9250911). 9.00 Cheap Chic (3017)95). 9.30 Can't Cook, Wortl Cook (1573176), 10.00 The Heat is On (7228027), 10.30 Michael Cole (3010114), 11.20 Brookside Ornribus (99311843), 1.20 Rolanda (8663805), 2.10 Roseanne

Show (4800911). **3.00** Film: Cate Metropole* (1937) (26827379). **5.05** Hart to Hart (1282805). 6.00 Film: Her Life as a Man (1984) (9677843). 8.00 Rescue 911 (7235466). **8.30** Beyon Belief: Fact or Fiction (7214973). 9.00 Jerry Springer Double Bill (9648331). 11.00 The Sex (9648331). **11.00** 1179 Files (1962244), **12.00** TNT

9.00 Gone with the Wind

9.00 Gone with the wind Weekend: Gone with the Wind (1939) (92086244). 12.45 Gettysburg (1993) (7/304480). 5.00 Close. Paramount Comedy Channel 7.00 Clueless (5350), 7.20 Desmonds (6718), 8.00 Roseane (336), 8.30 List Shoot Me (355), 9.00 Fibre National Assessment Shoot Me (1355). 9.00
Films National Lampoon's Movie Madness (1981) (67282). 11.00 Dressing for Breakfast (23350). 11.30
The Larry Sanders Show (85350). 12.00 Duckmay (4055). 12.00 Cornedy (19957). 1.00 Cornedy (19957). 1.00 Cornedy (19958). 1.30 Club Cless (40751). 2.00 Dr Katz (10683). 2.30 Soap (99190). 3.00 Hopperman (22867). 3.30 Nightstand (13770).

Granada Pius 6.00 The Box (9221911). 7.00 On the Buses (8651485). 7.30 Nearest and Dearest (8630992). 8.00 Bootsie and Shudge (8343447). 8.30 Dharma and Greg (8342718) 9.000 The Persuaders (2049602). 10.00 The Persuaders (8636176). **11.00** Man in a Suitcase (3756466). **1.00** Mission: Impossible (4231485), 3.00 Hay Five-0 (6945669) 5.00 Classic Coronation Street Omnibus (8367027). 7.00 The Professionals The Professionals (2376843). 8.00 The Professionals (2352263). 9.00 An Audience with Billy Connolly (2372027). 10.00 The Odd Couple (8347263). 10.30 Hogaris Heroes (8356911). 11.00 As Granada Men & Motor (111) 200am (1565737).

4.00 Co

FULL 7-DAY TV AND RADIO LISTINGS APPEAR IN 'THE INFORMATION'

BOXING DAY RADIO

the Day.

RADIO 4

(924-94.6MHz FM)

6.05 Sports Desk.

7.00 Today. 9.00 Home Truths.

6.57 Weather.

6.00 News Briefing.

cott Mills. 1.00 Lisa l'Anson. 5.00 Judge Jules. 7.00 Danny Rampling - Lovegroove Dance Party. 9.00 Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. 12.00 Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Nite. 2.00 The Essential Mix: Steve Lawyer. 4.00 - 6.30 Annie Nightingale. RADIO 2

(976-998MHz FM)

7.00 Mark Goodier. 10.00

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Property Suntage

(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Mo Dutta. 8.00 Brian Matthew. 10.00 Steve Wright's Saturday Show. 1.00 The Arthur Smith Memorial Christmas Lecture 2.00 Alan Freeman. 3.30 Johnnie Walker. 5.30 Paul Gambaccini. 7.00 The Boys from the Black Country: the Slade Story. 8.00 Meat Loaf for Christmas. 9.00 Sweet Soul Radio 2. 10.00 Bob Harris. 1.00 Lynn Parsons. 4.00 - 7.00 Mo Dutta.

RADIO 3 (902-924MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 CD Review. 11.00 Building a Library. 12.00 Private Passions. See Pick of the Day. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert (R) 2.00 Best of 3. 3.00 Spitalfields Festival

7 20 - 8.25 7 - 5.7. - 8 6 - 6 - 7 - 12.5 6 - 15 - 1 Spitalfields.
Spitalfields.
4.10 Concert, part 2.
5.00 Jazz Record Requests.
And His Mother Called 6.00 And His Mother Called Him

6.30 Opera on 3. Live from the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, a production of Mozart's pantomime-like opera. Performed in German. Dawn Upshaw, soprano (Pamina), Matthias Goeme, baritone (Papageno), Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera, New York/Charles Mackerras.

Act 1 7.45 The Met Opera Quiz. Steven Blier is in the chair for a special Christmas edition of the quiz, putting listeners' questions to Randall Behr and Brian Zeger. 8.10 The Magic Flute, Act 2. 10.00 | Had to Go Sick, Julian lactaren-Ross was one of the

PICK OF THE DAY

AFTER THE success of last year's festive interview with the 112-year-old percussion maestro Manfred Sturmer. Private Passions (12noon R3) is entertained by Lady Pilar Woffington. Argentine beauty and operatic entrepreneur. She is obviously rather smitten by presenter Michael Berkeley a real "Renovated Man" she

flatters: she is also, a little too

leading London literati of the 40s

and 50s and a wicked chronicler

of his time. Harold Pinter chooses

and reads one of his classic com-

ic stories of service life in the

Second World War. See Pick of

10.30 Nash Ensemble, Mozart:

Quintet in E flat for piano, oboe,

Schumann: Piano Quintet in E

610 Open Country Revisited.

10.00 News; Double Vision.

11.00 News; The Food

12.00 News; Money Box.

1.15 Correspondents Look

2.30 A Straight History of the

3.00 News; The Saturday Play:

Moonfleet. See Pick of the Day.

4.30 Weekend Woman's Hour.

2.00 News; Shelf Lives.

12.30 News Quiz of the Year.

Programme. 11.30 From Our Own

Correspondent.

12_55 Weather.

1.00 News.

Bent Banana.

5.00 Saturday PM.

5.30 Talking Pictures.

5.54 Shipping Forecast.

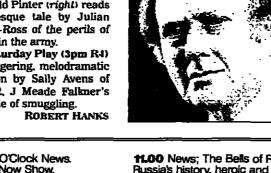
Ahead.

flat, Op 44. (R) 11.30 New York Cabaret. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

clarinet, bassoon and horn, K452.

obviously John Sessions In I Had to Go Sick (10pm R3) Harold Pinter (right) reads a Kafkaesque tale by Julian Maclaren-Ross of the perils of falling ill in the army.

The Saturday Play (3pm R4) is a swaggering, melodramatic production by Sally Avens of Moonfleet, J Meade Falkner's classic tale of smuggling.



6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.15 The Now Show. 6.45 Hearing with Hegley. (R) 7.00 News; Saturday Review. 7.45 Keyword Matt Frei highlights a word from a foreign language which captures the essence of that country and its culture, 3: Losing Face. For the Chinese feeling embarrassed is a

gravely serious business.
8.00 News; The Archive Hour: On Conversation. Poet and critic Tom Paulin explores the history of conversation, from the teaching dialogue of Socrates and Plato to the factory-floor gossip of nineties sitcoms. With illustrations from Peter Cook and Dudley Moore, Sir Isaiah Berlin and Harry

9.00 News; The Classic Serial: Bleak House. By Charles Dickens, dramatised in five parts by John Dryden. 4: Richard is on a path to self-destruction, Lady Dedlock finds her wayward past is rapidly catching up with her. Having sworn her long-lost daughter Esther to silence over their relationship, she is confronted by her lawyer, Tulkinghorn, who threatens to expose all. With Claire Price and Michael Kitchen. 10.00 News and Weather. 10.15 Education 2000. A forum which tests plans to improve the

country's education system by

the early years of the next centu-

ry. Edward Stourton invites panel

laying down the law is the way to

and guests to discuss whether

raise standards in school.

PICK OF THE DAY

AFTER THE excesses of concert footage of the legendary

vesterday, you may feel like Jimi Hendrix (right) at the

flopping in front of the TV and 1967 Monterey Pop Festival;

vegetating. If you fancy doing Glastonbury: the Movie

that to a background of music (8.20pm), which includes some

11.00 News; The Bells of Russia Russia's history, heroic and tragic, has been rung out through the centuries by thousands of church bells. Russian poet Irina Ratushin-skaya tells Ken Asch the story of bells through a mixture of chimes, legends, poems, songs and grand opera. **11.30** Fine Lines. (R)

12.00 News. 12.25 Experimental Feature: Short Short Stories. 12.30 The Late Story: Winter Stories. 12.48 Shipping Forecast.

1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.50 - 6.00 Bells on Sunday. **RADIO 4 LW**

(198kHz) 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special. **RADIO 5 LIVE**

(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Dirty Tackle. 6.30 Seconds Out. (R) 7.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Chiles on Saturday. **11.00** Sport on Five. Football: the London clubs have an early start - Arsenal vs West Harn and Wimbledon vs Charlton are both 12.00 kick-offs. Plus coverage of the games that kick-off at 3.00, followed by full commentary on Blackburn vs Aston Villa at 6.00. 8.00 The Late Six-O-Six. Call Tom Watt free on 0500 909693

and have your say on the festive football season. 9.00 The Treatment. Stuart Maconie and guests review the week's news

10.00 20th-Century Vox -Football. John inverdale takes a fan's-eye view of football across the century. 11.00 Late Night Currie. Edwina Currie gets behind the public image of a celebrity. Plus a phone-in. 1.00 Up All Night. Richard Dallyn

with news from Britain and around the world. 4.00 Extra Time Discussion on classic football moments. (R) 5.00 - 7.00 The Best of Campbell (R)

CLASSIC FM (100.0-101.9MHz FM) 6.00 Jane Markham. 8.00 Christmas Countdown. 11.00 Masters of Their Art. 12.00 Mike Read. 3.00 Margaret Howard. 6.00 Classic FM at the Movies. 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. 9.00 Opera 98. 10.00 Six of the Best. 12.00 Richard Morrison. 2.00 Alan Mann's African Afters. 3.00 - 6.00 Richard Morrison.

VIRGIN RADIO (1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM) 6.00 Jeremy Clark. 9.00 Harriet Scott. 12.00 Classic Countdown with Russ Williams. 2.00 Rock and Roll Football with Chris Evans. 6.00 Wheels of Steel 10.00 Janey Lee Grace. 2.00 -6.00 Richard West.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO (198kHz LW)

1.30 On Your Behalf. 1.45 Sports Roundup. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Music Review. 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Review of the Year. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 From Our Own Correspondent 4.00 Newsdesk 4.30 Global Business. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30 - 6.00 Jazzmatazz.

TALK RADIO 8.00 Sally Meen. #1.30 Kate Lloyd. 1.00 Premiership Show. 3.00 Nationwide League Live Commentary. 5.30 Danny Baker and Danny Kelly. **7.30** Nancy Roberts. **10.00** Mike Allen.

2.00 Rock Goes to College (424)621). 2.45 - 7.00 Shopping with Screenshop

6.00 Tiny Living (42059539), **9.0**5 Tempestt (4092336), **9.55** Rolonda

(5837539). 10.45 Special Babies

(1063317). 11:15 Living It Upl (2433881).

12.15 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (2981133).

12.45 Ready, Steady, Cook (7509775). 1.20 Michael Cole (8696133). 250 The

Roseanne Show (4840539), 3.00 Film:

Oliver Twist (1982) (26850607). 5.05 Hart to Hart (1215133). 6.00 Film: This Can't

Be Love (1994) (9600171). 8.00 Rescue

911 (7268794). 8.30 Beyond Bellef: Fact

or Fiction (7247201). **9.00** Jerry Springer Double Bill (9688959). **11.00** The Sex

LIVING

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS JON SPEELMAN

AFTER 12 months of intermittently manic activity and what must be literally thousands of miles of footslog, Mark Hebden last weekend confirmed himself as the winner for the second year running, of the Onyx Grand Prix. The £3,000 first prize remained in doubt right up to Sunday morning when Jim Plaskett, on 3/3 and still on course for the perfect 5/5 that would have snatched victory, was defeated by Danny Gormally; the only other contender. Keith Arkell, was playing in the Grandmaster B tournament in Oxford.

Meanwhile Hebden, who had already dropped a half-point as early as round 3, sailed to 4.5/5 to end up first equal with Bogdan Lalic half a point ahead of Plaskett, Gormally, and Charles Tippleston on 4, A total of more than 150 players were competing in four sections at Islington with about 50 in the Open; but only the winner of the Intermediate, Nick Burrows, succeeded in making a perfect 5/5.

Hebden's final score was 192.4 ahead of Arkell, 191.2, who won 11 Qa4 cxd4 £1.200 and Plaskett, 188.3 (£700). This win brings his total of Grand Prix 13 Qxc4 Qxc4 victories up to four, equalling Miles and Michael Adams's record. Hebden is also only the fourth grandmaster to record back-to-back victories, particularly difficult since while other high prize winners receive bonus points towards their 20 Nft Rc7 score in the following year, the win- 21 Ne3 Be4 ner himself receives none.

The Onyx Grand Prix has 10 23 Nd2 Bf5 other sections, ranging from the so- 24 Bf2 a5 called "Prixette", won by Susan 25 Rac1 Bh6 Lalic, right down to the under-10 won by David Howell. A wonderful stimulus to chess activity in this country; long may it continue.

This is Hebden's final game of the 30 Nxc4 Rd7 season. Parker chose an opening 31 a4 Rd5

line that I've used myself against Hebden - though I can't imagine playing 6 f4 except in a blitz game. Hebden quickly gained the advantage of the two bishops - one very interesting aspect was his dismissal of 18... Bxf3 19 gxf3 Kf7 in favour of 18... Kf7, keeping the tension. Eventually the position opened and the bishops came into their own, though only after the blinder 57 Rc2? - White should have played 57 Kal

> White: Jonathan Parker Black: Mark Hebden Islington Open 1998 Queen's Pawn Game

did it become clear.

1 d4 Nf6 32 Red1 Bd7 33 b3 h4 2 c3 g6 34 Nd2 Rb6 3 Bg5 Bg7 4 Nd2 0-0 35 Rc3 Rc6 5 e3 d6 36 Rxc6 Bxc6 6 f4 c5 37 NB Rh5 7 Bc4 Nc6 38 Ed2 e6 8 Ngf3 Qb6 39 Rb1 Bd6 9 Qb3 Qc7 40 Rc1 Ke7 10 0-0 Na5 41 Rb1 Kd7 42 Ret Bd5 12 exd4 Nxc4 43 Rb1 b6 44 Ke3 Kc6 14 Nxc4 Nd5 45 b4 Rf5 15 Rfel Be6 46 bxa5 bxa5 16 Ne3 f6 47 Nxh4 Rxf4 17 Nxd5 Bxd5 48 Nxg6 Re4+ 18 Bh4 Kf7 19 Nd2 Rfc8 22 Nf1 d5

49 Kd3 e5 50 Be3 exd4 51 Bxd4 Re6 52 Rc1+ Kd7 53 Nb4 Be4+ 54 Kc3 Bb4+ 55 Kb2 Bc6 56 Bc3 Re2+ 26 Be3 Bf8 27 h3 h5 28 Kf2 Ra6

57 Rc2? Ba3+ 58 Kxa3 Rxc2 59 Bxf6 Bd5 29 c4 dxc4 60 Bb2 Rf2 61 Nf3 Rxg2 0-1

East-West game; dealer North

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

SOUTH FOLLOWED a very natural line of play on this deal - one that, I feel, would be chosen by the majority of players - and went down. See if you can spot the unusual timing that would have succeeded. Was it impossible to find at the table?

After two passes South opened One Heart; West (facing a passed partner) overcalled with Four Spades. North and East passed but South fought on with Five Clubs. North gave preference to hearts and all passed. West deciding to take his chances in defence.

West led OA against Five Hearts and declarer ruffed the diamond continuation. At trick 3 he led his singleton spade and West, after taking his ace, played a third diamond. South ruffed, crossed to ♥K and finessed # Q successfully. The ace of clubs now exposed the sit-

uation in both clubs and trumps. table, came to hand with a diamond ruff, and trumped another club with dummy's last heart. Then he attempted to cash A K but East ruffed and South had to lose a club at the end.

North **◆**K432 VK32 ♦J942 **486 ♦**AQJ10986 **4** 5 ₩5 ~984 **♦ Q 10 8 6** ♣KJ1097 South **♥AQJ1076 ♣**AQ542

South's play looks reasonable enough but note what happens if he does not play a spade at trick 3. (Yes, that does look odd to do anything else, bearing in mind that West is almost certainly marked with A.) After a heart to the king and a club finesse, declarer crossruffs clubs and diamonds and then draws trumps. Finally, at trick 12, he leads his spade! West wins but must give dummy the last trick with + K.

9.00 Gone with the Wind Weekend: Making of a Legend: Gone With the Wind Declarer ruffed a club on the (60076607). 11.15 Tall, Dark and Handsome (49538881). 12.15 Vivien Leigh:

TNT

Files (1395572) 12.00 Close

Scarlett and Beyond (20234263). 1.15 Making of a Legend: Gone With the Wind (92529244), 5.00 Close. PARAMOUNT

COMEDY CHANNEL

7.00 Clueless (4775). 7.30 Desmond's (1171). 8.00 Roseanne (3423). 8.30 Just Shoot Me (2930). 9.00 Films: The Party (1968) (31201). 11.00 Dressing for Breakfast (27510). 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show (24572), 12,00 Duckman (89737). 12.30 Vacant Lot (41089). 1.00 Comedy Store (81843), 1-30 Club Class (10963), 2.00 Dr Katz (59805), 2.30 Soan (61640). 3.00 Hooperman (78379). 3.30 Nightstand (52992), 4.00 Close. **GRANADA PLUS**

6,00 The Box (9261539). 7.00 On the Buses (8684713), 7.30 Leave It to Charlie (8663220). 8.00 The Army Game (8376775). **8.30** Mind Your Language (8375046). 9.00 Christmas on the Street (8399626), 9.30 Christmas on the Street 8272539), 10,00 Christmas on the Street (4243220). 10.30 Christmas on the Street (8388510). **11.00** Return of the Saint (4202794). **1.30** Emmerdale (6434930). 3.00 Hawaii Five-O (6978997). 5.00 Hart to Hart (2577510). 6.00 Watching Special (8251046). 7.00 Poirot (8671249). 9.00 The Comedians (2305355), 10.00 The Odd Couple (8370591), 10.30 Hogan's Heroes (8396539), 11.00 As Granada Men & Motors (1598065), 2.00 Close.

(21166423). 8-35 Christmas Showtime

with Boyzone (88617125). 9.30 The Morbegs (92224688). 9.45 Film: The Never-Ending Story, Bullied schoolboy

that draws him into its mystical world.

overs a magical boo

SATELLITE AND CABLE

SKY PREMIER

6.00 Pete's Dragon (1977) (90576133). **8.15** It Takes Two (1995) (73014794). **10.00** Ghostbusters II (1989) (91814220). 11.45 Pete's Dragon (1977) (97325572). 2.00 Frog and Wombat (1998) (87125). 4.00 Ghostbusters II (1989) (1046). 6.00 1 (Takes Two (1995) (22539). 8.00 Star *k: First Contact (1996) (27084). 10.00 Dente's Peak (1997) (268572). 11.50 Home for the Holidays (1995) (117794). 1.35 While My Pretty One Sleeps (19763640). 330 - 6.00 Riders of the Purple Sage (1996) (80564076). SKY MOVIEMAX

6.00 Gus (1976) (79814133). 7.45 The Last Home Run (1996) (10371046). 9.30 Criema Paradiso (1988) (45997), 11.30 (1975) (10355), 3.00 The Last Home Run (1996) (68159442). 4.45 Cinema Paradiso (1988) (385046), 6.45 Femmes Fatales (154423), 7:15 Now and Then (1996)

- 24171). 9.00 Ghost (1990) (28713). 11.05 Striptease (1996) (45143). 1.00 Were No Angels (1989) (255911). 2.45 Cover Me (1995) (542805). 4.20 - 6.00 Unwed Father (1997) (886447). SKY CINEMA

11.00 How to Marry a Milionaire (1953) 8572). **12_30** My Fair Lady (1964) (8789133). 3.30 Around the World in 80 Who Would Be King (1975) (94047684). 8.00 A Passage to India (1984) (34449846). 10.45 North Dallas Forty (1979) (2840510), 12.45 The Drowning Pool (1975) (7019089). 2.35 Road to Zanzibar (1941) (9085973). 4.10 How to Marry a Millionaire (1953) (1390756). 5.45

F!LMFOUR 2 Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders (137) Mars (1973) (3159862). See Pick of the Day. 7.30 Jimi Plays Monterey (4268065). See Pick of the Day. 8.20 Glastonbury: the Movie (1995) (47015133). See Pick of the Day. 10.00 That'll Be the Day (1973) (3178997). See Pick of the Day. 11.30 The Harder They Come (1973) (2835959). See Pick of the Day. 1.15 Ruda Boy Featuring the Clash (84317350). 3.25 Straight to Hell (1996) (9401911). 4.50 -6.00 Jimi Plays Monterey (7495244). DISCOVERY CHANNEL 4.00 Navy SEALs - the Silent Option (3292959). 5.00 Adventures of the Quest

periods. It continues with: Jimi Plays Monterey (7.30pm), (\$315930). **9.00** Beyond T Rex (5335794). **10.00** Prehistoric Sharks (5338881).

11.00 Hunting the Dinosaur (Wild Discovery) (9862107). 12.00 Navy SEALs - the nt Option (1096195). 1.00 Adventures of the Ouest (7959447), 2.00 Close. SKY ONE 7.00 Bump in the Night (43171). 7.30 Street Sharks (39978), 8.00 The Adventures of Sinbad (67997). 9.00 The Simpsons (55355). 9.30 Count Duckula (67688). 10.00 Hercules: the Legendary Journeys (28862). 11.00 World Wrestling

Federation Live Wire (48626). 12.00 World Wrestling Federation Shot Gun (80539). **1.00** The New Adventures of Superman (66959). **2.00** Star Trek; Deep Space Nine (56733), 3.00 Star Trek -Deep Space Nine (69572). 4.00 Star Trefc Voyager (88607). 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (8572), 6.00 Xena: Warrior Princess (79423), 7.00 The Simpsons (9201). **7.30** The Simpsons (3997). **8.00** 3rd Rock from the Sun (5249), 8.30 3rd Rock from the Sun (7084). 9.00 The Beast (87107). 11.00 Star Trek - Deep Space Nine (29591), 12.00 Showbiz Weekly (34263), 12.30 The Big Easy (92599), 1.30 Fire (60621), 2.30 - 6.00 Long Play (3846244).

SKY SPORTS 1 6.00 Superblies - Foggy's Hat-trick (13336) 8.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (67201). 8.30 Racing News (66572). 9.00 Sky (2050862). 6.00 Classic Story of the SAS Sports Top 20 (47423), 11,00 Max Power (71978), 12,00 Gaette Soccer Saturday (7165881). 7.00 Wheels and Keels: The Liners (5339510), 8.00 Dawn of the Dinos

have just the evening for you. Lemonheads; and two films Their schedule of music films starring real-life pop stars starts with Ziggy Stardust and That'll Be the Day (10pm) with the Spiders from Mars (6pm). David Essex (as well as Ringo a rockumentary about one of Starr and Keith Moon), and The David Bowie's more flamboyant Harder They Come (11.30pm), starring Jimmy Cliff. JAMES RAMPTON (7691591), 5.30 Ford Footbal Special ackburn Rovers vs Aston Villa (173881). R.30 Football League Review West



Bromwich Albion vs Port Vale (66404). 10.00 Ford Football Special Blackburn Rovers vs Aston Vila (44997), 11.30 Max Power (56978). 12.30 Football League Review West Bromwich Albion vs Port Vale (73973), 2.00 Ford Football Special Blackburn Rovers vs Aston Villa (96060). 3.30 Superbikes - Foggy's Hat-trick (97992), 5.30 - 6.00 Futbol Mundial

SKY SPORTS 2 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (3136862). 7.30 Racing News (3155997), 8.00 Strong Man Weider Stronoman Tournament (7508607). 9.30 Racing News (3165220). 10.00 Soccer AM (3185084). 12.00 Footbell League West Bromwich vs Port Vale (7070317). 3-00 Unbelievable Sports (4303012), 3.30 Showlumping - Spruce Meadows Championship Season Review (6017355). **4.30** Squash (8239355). **5.30** International Cricket South Africa vs West 9.30 Life of the Lions (7:88862). 11.30 International Cricket Australia vs England (8868997). 2.00 Second Innings (5087534), 2.30 - 7.00 International

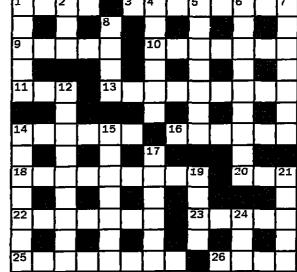
indies (5401607). 7.00 International Cricket Australia vs England (7794133). Cricket Australia vs England (4521495). SKY SPORTS 3 8.00 International Cricket South Africa vs West Indies (85260607), 10.00 International Cricket Australia vs England

(85263794), 10,30 International Cricket South Africa v West Indies (98123201). 3.00 International Cricket Australia vs England (54343220), **5.30** Wild Spirits (93531355), 6.00 Max Power (48772539), 7.00 H2O (67400607), 7.30 Dancing IDSF Open Standard (34398133). 8.30 World Motor Sport (69049404). 11.30 Wild Spirits (85269978). 12-00 Close. **EUROSPORT** 7.30 Xtrem Sports: Yoz Action (71794). 8.30 Xtrem Sports (79404). 9.30

Olympic Games (553978). 12.06 Bioopers (95084). 12.30 Fun Sports (21997). 1.00 Offroad (19152). 2.00 Fishing (44775). 4.00 Sumo (20607). 5.00 Martial Arts (4012). 6.00 Strength (24648). 7.00 Motor Sport (1201). 7.30 Karting (71336). 9.00 Boxing (45404). 10.00 Bowling (48591). 11.00 Fitne (87539), 12.00 Darts (25602), 1.00 Close UK GÖLD

7.00 Big Break (9062305). 7.30 Neighbours Omnibus (46693132). 9.25 Dallas Omnibus (91648607). 12.30 EastEnders Omnibus (20363355), 3.00 The Bill Omnibus (86860881). 5.25 No Place like Home (1310997). 6.05 Film: Brewster's Millions (1985) (44549065). 8.00 Only Fools and Horses (92347572). 9.55 Men Behaving Badly (7617201). 10.35 Saturday Night Comedy: One Foot in the Grave (4684688). 11.25 Saturday Night Comedy: Porridge (698-7794). 12-20 m: The Producers (1967) (8348973).

No.3803 Saturday 26 December



CONCISE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

Dramatic production (4) Tropical grassland (8) Time (mus.) (5)

10 Christening (7) 11 Witch (3) 13 Type of nut (9) 14 Sex drive (6) 16 Fashion again (6)

18 Fail to wake in time (9) 20 Managed (3) 22 Copy (7) 23 Beat (5) Heavenly (8)

26 Gauze for cleansing wound etc (4)

Vegetable-growing area 1 Limb (3) Convent superior (6)

DOWN

Pacify by giving ground Person living nearby (9) Sailor's bed (7) Ceremonial (4) 12 Nonsense (9) 14 Like a big cat (7)

15 Lose hope (7) Spanish currency (6) Golf shot (4) 21 Wealthy individual (5) 24 Uncooked (3)

Solution to Thursday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Manned, 4 Allay (Mandalay), 8 Recto, 9 Incisor, 10 Intrude, 11 Hero, 12 Sac. 14 Dean, 15 Oath, 18 Tab, 21 Urge, 23 Avarice, 25 Violent, 26 Doubl, 27 Rayon, 28 Greece, DOWN: 1 Martin, 2 Necktic, 3 Eloquent, 4 Arch, 5 Lisle, 6 Yarrow, 7 Hives, 13 Colander, 16 Tribute, 17 Quaver, 19 Baste, 20 Centre, 22 Glory, 24 Lean.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N JRELAND As BBC1 England except: 5.25 Newsine (8037442). **BBC1 SCOTLAND**

As BBC1 England except: 4.50
Afternoon Sportscene (9344046). 5.25
Reporting Scotland (8037442). 11.05
Sportscene - March of the Day (472997).
11.55 Film: The Naked Gun 2 1/2: the
Smell of Feer (460442). 1.20 Joins BBC BBC1 WALES d except: 5.25

As BBC1 England e Wales Today (8037442). ANGLIA As LWT except: 4.40 CD UK (93313621). 5.00 The Little Engine That Could (5030176). CENTRAL As LWT (916602).

HTV WALES As LWT except: 4.45 News; Weather (2300794), 4.40 CD UK (93313621), 5.00 The Little Engine That Could (5030176). MERIDIAN

WESTCOUNTRY As LWT except: 4.40 CD UK (933)3621) 5.00 The Little Engine That Could (5030176). S4C

As Channel 4 except: 6.00 As Channet 4 except 3.00 Christmes T4: Sesume Street (21082591).

12.00 Planed Plant: Galfagati Nadolig (4614268), 3.15 The Hadgehog in the Fog (57190978). 3.30 Film: All Dogs Go to Heaven. Cute carloon adventure from Don Buth (The Land Before Time). A streetwise pooch in 1399 New Orleans is Don Bluth (The Land Before Time). A streetwise pooch in 1939 New Orleans is despatched to heaven before his time, thanks to his old gambling pal Cartace Malone. But he wangles his way back to Earth and teems up with a little girl for a spot of dogged revenge. (50966046). 5.05 Newyddion A Cinwaraeon (35630607). 5.10 Y Clwb Rygbi (5902959). 7.45 Newyddion (55002881). 8.00 Noson Lawen (2147178). 9.00 Thomas Gee (21466249). 10.00 Film: Remember Me. Sinister TV thriler about a comile, still crieving after the death of couple, still grieving after the death of their young son, who try to rescue their marriage with a summer stay in a small town in Cape Cod. But the town, and the

most terrifying of the children-from-Hell horrors. Gregory Peck substitutes a baby marked with three sixes for the one wife Lee Remick loses in childbirth, only to real with horror as a host of tolk are horribly bumped-off amid some genuine shock-it-to-you scalp-tinglers. (S6761201). 1.40 David Bleines Street Magic (2091076). 2.35 Film: The Gambler (83285911). 4.15 NYPD Blue (88527447). 5.00 Close.

ve: Monte Carlo or Bust (59700046). 2.35 Film: Doctor Zhivago. David I san turns the turnultuous history of the Russian Revolution into shamel romantic fiction. Despite some odd casting, it works a treat. With Omar Sharif, Julie Christie. (91369930). 6.00 The

Angelus (37450688), 6.01 Stx-One, Weatherline and News for the Deaf (20703220), 6.20 Cartoon Time 42106881). **6.25** Film: Casper. croplasmic slop based on unfunny triandly ghost carbon series, (45020046).

8:10 Winning Streak (48396381). 9:00

News and Weatherline (29722387). 9:20

Film: The American President, Michael

Douglas as bereaved President falling for lobbytst America Bening in slick romance, third bur sharply scrinted and well Alcoholic lawyer Paul Newman has one last shot at redemption in superb David Marnet drama directed by Sidney Lurnet. (57236262). 4.00 The Avengers (7773974). 4.50 Film: Five Fingers. Muddled wartime suspense with Nazi spy James Mason (80002447). **NETWORK 2**

that draws him into its mystical world. Exciting children's adventure with strikingly deployed effects. (45617152). 11.30 2TV Christmas Hits (1042775). 1.15 RTE Racing (53058930). 3.35 Children 10th Birthday Celebration (38386855). 5.35 Cinninte Nuachta; Glenroe (25924199). 6.05 Home Improvement (34933846). 6.35 St Stephen's Night with Podge and Rodge: MTV Liva (60340648). 7.30 Are You Being Served? (32316084). 8.05 Film: Gremins. Muppet-like creatures cause comic Ciristmas chaos 8.05 Film: Grentins. Muppet-like creatures cause comic Christmas chaos in a snowy suburban town. Sly film buff gags outweigh genuine jokes about 10 to 1. But it's a Steven Spielberg production, so the effects are special. With Zach Galligan, Hoyt Axton. (8.0399355). 10.05 A Scare at Bedtime with Podge and Rodge (58746572). 10.15 The Premiership (11116046). 1115 St. Stephen's Night with Povine and Rodge: Yas. Minister (IIII0u40). Tuzo SI Stephens Night wi Podge and Rodge; Yes, Minister 56381355). 12.20 Portidge Special (81926485). 1.15 The Fast Show (18023737). 2.10 "Allo (49221911). 2.00 Julificular to (20221911). 3.00 Jobfinder 98 (99281737)

people in it, are a bit spooky... (327)9423). 11.35 Film: The Omen. The Could (5030176).

6.00 Ceolta Nolleg (38590862). 6.55 Complete Cosmos (49050268). 730 Film: Sailor Beware*. The usual Martin-Lewis confection of drippy romance and silly contection of drippy formance and sity stapstick, with Jerry straining for laughs by pulling "turnty" taces, (24756249). 9.05 Gardeners' Diery (27640268). 9.30 Film: The Inn of the Shith Happiness. Ingrid Bergman as English missionary Gladys Alytward. Curtous casting choice in a sentimental re-arrangement of the facts, (43875171). 12.20 Film: News Headines; Westhander Montal Carlo or Blust.

toobyst Arnere bening in sack romance, trivial but sharply scripted and well played. (80965794). 11.30 Naws Headines (7385794). 11.35 Film: From Here to Eternity*. Army base camp routine in Hawati in the months leading up to Pearl Harbor. Solid Hollywood blockbuster with Burt Lancaster. (88008510). 1.45 Film: The Verdict. Abordholic lawage Part Newman has one 6.45 The Silver Brumby (17261171), 730 Bob Morane (29662171). 7.40 Prince of

Atlantis (11014775). 8.05 Rugrats

JASPER REES

TELEVISION REVIEW

epicureanism, a gentility at odds with the whirling excitement of a world he helped to create and, at least initially, even controlled. Paul McCartney remembered him lying in his immaculate suit on a bed in an American hotel smoking marijuana, saying "I'm a Jewl" and giggling helplessly. You could almost say that he embodied the great struggle between the Fifties and the Sixtles, between the Fifties and the Sixtles, between the bottling it all hang out. "I'm red hot for sex," he wrote in one of his last letters, but however much he wrote about it, he didn't seem to talk about it, which must have been a factor in his death. The Bernstein film, by Susan Lacy, is a more breathless appreciation, as anything

show in three years, although the BBC repeats the old ones so often that it doesn't feel like it. Expect the familiar pleasures of the two "stuff-and-nonsense" countrywomen, as well as a look downstairs at one of the royal palaces. Guests include Joanna Lumley (helping them spoof the movie Titanic) and Helen Mirren, whom they will be teaching how to become a Shakespearean actress. Very Morecambe and Wise that — as is their joining the Spice Girls in one of their routines. Vic and Bob may like to think they are the new Eric and Ernie, but it seems another duo have their own ideas.

those fair-weather churchgoers who only show their face in the house of God at Christmas and Easter. You can tell it doesn't set much sfore by the liturgical small print when, to celebrate the birth of Christ, it spends its time honouring the dead. This Christmas, documentaries laid to rest Ted Hughes and John Wells, A repeat of Futher Ted remembered Dermol Morgan. There was an alternative Christmas message from the parents of Stephen Lawrence. The season to be buried. Perhaps this is why top-drawer arts bio-does are rife at an otherwise unchallenging time of year. "Force of Nature", a Close Up film about Hughes that on otherwise unchallenging time of year. "Force of Nature", a Close Up film about Hughes that on otherwise unchallenging time of year. "Force of Nature", a Close Up film about Hughes has been mollified by thre. "Her shadow lay across his life." Despite that shadow, actually cast by more than one suicide, Seamus Heaney called Hughes and to head with two-parters on influential Jewish figures. Arena: The Barlan Epstein Story (BBC2) is running concurrently with Bernstoin (C4). Both films conclude to the was reluctant to resolve that the healfway point, Epstein is way ahead of Bernstein. There is a lush density to Anthony Wall's clegiac film about the Bensles manager that you expect from Arend. The interviews have been layered over old footage and new with imagination and care. They're also thoughtfully located. Gerry Marsden was filmed on the Mersey ferry, just like in the song. He recalled complaining that Epstein didn't pay "my other artisis", as they were dismissively bracketed, as much light bulb."

Epstein retorted. "You're all little lightbulb."

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appreciation, as anything narrated by Ned Sherrin will always be. The narrative treats its subject with the same joshing farnilianity as the construction workers on Brooklyn Bridge who took off their hard hats as his funeral conteas suited nast and

cortège sailed past and shouted, "Goodbye, Lenny, goodbye!" in this account his performances are always "legendary", nations are taken "by storm", he is "mobbed wherever he went". You want to be told something new.

Martha Gellhorn said he was "a force of nature", echoing Close Up's encapsulation of Ted Hughes. But so far there is no real inquiry into Bernstein's vanity or, apart from a passing aliusion to his bisexuality, his prodigious appetites.

Talking of which, there was bingeing as usual elsewhere on television. The economical way of ticking off the usual celebs without enduring all their Christmas specials was to watch Before They Were Famous III (BBCI), which disinters old clips of the stars. The usual suspects were all there – Leslie Ash, Carol Smillie etc. – relentlessly chasing fame from the young Alan Davies, caught mooching about on Greenham Common.

BBC1

6.00 Pingu (4582607). 6.05 Eek the Cat (2405930). 6.20 Follow That Sieigh (2422607). 6.40 The Littlest Pet Shop (8176775). 7.05 The Wizard of Oz (587-3249). 7.30 X.Men (1718338). 7.50 Round the Twist (1712152). 8.15 The New Adventures of Superman (F) (3259065). 9.00 Almost Live, Definitely Kicking (42631-628). 11.15 Robbie Williams – Some Mothers Do Ywe 'Em (R) (357423).

1.20 News) Weather (T) (24412274). **1.25** The Snowman (S) (6138030). **2.25** Brambly Hedge (R) (17982930).

(Dwight Little 1895 US). Sequel to the hugely popular save-the-whale sage - this time taking to the open seas as the by now freed Willy heads for a rendezvous with an oil slick. Jason James Richter and Kelko the killer whale resume their roles from the original, along with Michael Macisen as the lad's foster father and August Schellenberg as the chanting North American sage. Shamelessly manipulative, of course, but the aquatic marmmal action melts some of one's natural resistance (S) (T) (78488662).

7.48 The National Lottery Draw. Michael Crawford and Rick Adams help with the big-money balls (S) (T)

9,05

Weather (T) (863846)

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Thomas 1971 UK). A broad-edged insight into industrial relations during the Heath administration, with Kenneth Cope's shop steward causing chaos at a lavatory-making factory employing Sid James, Kenneth Williams, Charles Hawtrey and the rest (5085263). To 155am.

11.45 IIII Super Mario Bros (Rocky Morton 1993 US).
Movie Inspired (if that's the right word) by a computer game, and an old computer game at that (38847220).

2.50 EILM Casper (Brad Silberling 1985 US). Enjoyable animation-live action mix about a lonely boy-ghost who befrisnds the young daughter (Christina Ricci) of a ghost hunter (Bill Pullman) (S) (T) (2157539).

4.20 The World's Strongest Man (S) (9729268). **4.50** Final Score (S) (9344046). **5.15** News; Weather (T) (2911442). **5.25** Regional News and Weather (8037442). 5.30 Animal Hospital: Fleas and All. Behind-the-scenes documentary about the making of Animal Hospital (S) (1) (216189).

Casualty. The staff are enjoying the post-Christmas lul, which means some catastrophe is about to end up in their cubicles. Cue a hostage situation and an abandoned baby (S) (T) (6577238).

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8.55 White Christmas (S) (T) (507084).

10.15 GIQUES French and Saunders. Their first show in three years. See Comedy of the Day, below (S) (T) (412220). 9.35 Men Behaving Badly. Second of the three episodes constituting this year's Christmas special. Deborah, Tony and Dorothy join Gary for a weekend in Worthing. Dorothy thinks she is pregnant, and Gary thinks he is falling in love – with Wendy (S) (T) (985591). 9.00 Arena: The Brian Epstein Story. The second half of this excellent documentary investigating the turbulent life and career of Brian Epstein, who died 30 years ago in mysterious circumstances. This programme looks at Epstein's achievements as manager of the Beatles, including the first stadium gig and the first global broadcast of a song, it also examines his increasingly excessive lifestyle, fuelled by gambling and drugs, with contributions from Paul McCartney among many others (S) (T) (7443084). 10.45 DIDIDE The American. Terrific Henry James adaptation starring Matthew Modine and Diana Rigg. See Drama of the Day, below (S) (T) (239133).

11.05 11111 The Naked Gun 21/21 the Smell of Fear (David Zucker 1991 US). Lesile Nielsen and Priscilla Presiey are reunited, following a mejor amount of silliness surrounding a plot to nobble an influential "green" spokesman. Good fun (S) (T) (323238).

THE Split Second (Dick Powell 1953 US). Unusual thriller about escaped convicts holing up with hostages in a Nevada ghost town that turns out to be a nuclear test site (and the Government is just about to make use of it) (Followed by Weatherview) (558224). To 3am. [B![0][63] The Maltese Falcon (John Huston 1941 US), Huston's immaculate rendering of Dashiell Hammett's thriller with Humphrey Bogert as the defin Sam Spade. See Film of the Day, below (1) (836317).

THE DAY

COMEDY OF THE DAY

THE AMERICAN (10.15pm BBC2, right) Despite the delights of Our Mutual Friend and Vanily Fair, the current TV costume drama bubble seems to have burst. However, don't miss this beautifully judged Henry James adaptation starring Malthew Modine as the self-made American in the Faris of the late 1860s. Full of open, generous New World ways, Mothne nearly sacrifices himself to the hermetic world of the ancient French aristocracy. Dianne Higg is terrifying as the dynastic, Mrs Danvers-ish Madanne de Bellegarde, mamu to the object of Modine's amour. Claive (played by the intelligence). DRAMA OF BBC2

6.05 LIMM City Lights (Charlie Chaplin 1931 US). The little tramp falls in love with a blind flower-seller and tries to find the money needed for an eye operation (7711713).

7.30 LIMM The Letter (William Wyler 1940 US). Somerset Maugham's Singapore-set tale about a rubber plantation owner's wife (Bette Davis) who shoots her lover, claiming self-defence and expecting a speedy acquittal. The New Yorker's Pauline Kael wrote that "Davis gives what is very likely the best study of female sexual hypocrisy in film history" (76968133).

9.05 PITM Hamlet (Franco Zeffirelli 1990 US). The Prince of Denmark proved beyond Mel Gibson, but he's bolistered by good support work from Glerin Close (Gertrude), Alan Bates (Claudius), Ian Holm (Polonius) and Helena Bonham Carter (Ophelia) (S) (T) (42614859).

11.15 Cricket - the Ashes (S) (355065), 11.45 Christmas in Vienna (112572), 12.45 Don Carlos (17922862), 4.10 Choir of the Year (7983220), 4.50 The Nanny (9342688).

5.18 Are You Watching Jimmy Hill? Profile of the controversial, big-chinned sports pundit, with contributions from Des Lynam, Terry Venubles, Bulbby Robson and Malcolm Allison (S) (T) (6385336).

6,06

1967 US). Influential, big-budgot western recounting the friendship between respected lawman Doc Holliday (Kirk Douglas) and deadly gunslinger Wyatt Earp (Burt Lancaster), and the events leading up to the famous shoot-out in Tembstone. Many people thought that Douglas and Lancaster were cast in the wrong roles, but the public loved it. The writer was Leon Urls and the film was based on one of his magazine articles (T)

6.40 The IBlack | seaso|
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7.45 EILM A VIew to a Kiii (John Gien 1985 UK), Roger Moore was having real problems squeezing into his tuxedo in this, his last (and one of the very worst) James Bond movie. The whole thing has a flabby, dispirited feel as Aryan supervillain Christopher Walken plots to have his wicked way with Silicon Valley. Filmed mainly in France and California, with Grace Jones and Patrick Macnee in support (1) (62363317).

40 Because It's a Lonely World - with Burt Bacharach and Elvis Costello. The recent musical collaboration between the duo (T) (712:52).

12.10 ITIM Gremlins (Joe Dante 1984 US). Enjoyably boisterous whimsy about an infestation of destructive furry critters in a small American town (T) (262640).

11.15 Dreaming of a Wright Christmas. Ian Wright and more of his quickly palling chat. Guests ere Robson Green, Alan Davies and Denise Van Outen (S) (447201).

2.10 Entertainment Now (2930534).

3.40 ENTER The Absent-Minded Professor (Robert Stevenson 1961 US). Professor Fred MacMurray invents a material that can make people fly (5107027). To 4.40am.

2.30 IIII The Garnbler (Keroly Makk 1985
UK/Neth/Hun). Michael Gambon and Jodhi May star in this rather good tale of the Russian writer Dostoevsky's obsession with gambling (643008). To 4.10am.

6,00 QMT CD U (36158 Tales TV (1823881). 9.25 SMTV Live (42302220). 11.30 UK (S) (31355). 12.30 ITN News; Weather 68442). 12.40 Bugs Bunny's Looney Christmas

JLOS FILM Raise the Titanici (Jerry Jameson 1980 UK). The biggest of all the recently deceased Lew Grade's chematic flops - leaving the Titanic on the movie producers' equivalent of the ocean floor, where it was to remain until a certain James Cameron got it right. There's a cumbersome Cold War angle to this over-initiated yarn about an attempt to raise the old ship, which, it is believed, contains the only supply of a vital ingredient for the ultimate nuclear deterrent. Very silly, Jeson Robards and Richard Jordan star (94409572).

3.05 TIMM Money, I Shrunk the Kids (Joe Johnston 1989 US). Eccentric inventor Rick Moranis accidentally miniaturises his family in this enjoyable, if much-screened, Disney comedy (S) (T) (25203292).

4.45 ITN News; Weather (T) (2300794).

5.00 TIMM Richle Rich (Donald Petrie 1994 US).

Macaulay Culkin plays the world's wealthest boy (which probably wasn't far off the truth anyway), who teams up with some sassy street kids to thwart the evil capitalist who is trying to get his hands on the family company. For the more undiscriminating child (S) (T) (17205201).

8.20

Jack Hawkins takes his famous trembling stiff upper lip (memorably described by film biographer David Thomson as "a grotesque struggle between emotionalism and rigor mortis") to the North Atlantic in this Eric Ambler-scripted adaptation of Nicholas Monsarrats tale of wartime martitime pluck. Hawkins plays the driven commander of a Royal Navy corvette on convoy-protection duty, haunted by the loss of a former vessel to a German U-boat. With Donald Sinden, Denholm Elliot and Stanley Baker, and the likes of Molra Lister and Virginia McKenna keeping the home lires burning (T) (40527404).

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Moment of Truth Christmas Special. Cilia k invites three tamilles from the Midlands to take on sonal tasks with the chance of winning a dream a, while members of the audience get the chance to their own instant "Moment of Truth" in the studio. I for the pub, methinks (S) (T) (1727220).

Brookside Omnibus. It's party time at the Johnsons' (rarely, surely, has a more frightening sentence been written). Meanwhile, that naughty Bev is pleading with Flon, he of the dodgy ticker, to help her get Josh back (R) (S) (T) (75913862).

10.15 Foul Play. Documentary about three new women referees who patrol the pitches of West Yorkshire's notorious Sunday League, and the Football Association's campaign to recruit more women. Have they got what it takes? (1) (864510).

News; Weather; Lottery Result (916802)

12.40 One Amazing Night. Tribute concert to Burt Bacharach featuring Eivis Costello, Sheryl Crow, Chrissle Hynde, All Saints and Dionne Warwick (939553).

the composer,
the contrast between
tks (Age of Anxlety, for
well as his attempts to
r years (T) (495046).

1.50

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERARD GILHERT



FILM OF THE DAY

THE MALTESE FALCON (1/45pm BBC2, right) It's Christmas, so include yourself in the familiar delights of this perfect Dashiell Hammett adaptation (the director, John Huston, was clever enough to see that, in his plotting and dialogue, Hammett had pretty much written a film script). Bogart's Sam Spade is the subject of countless essays – it's the richness of the surrounding characterisation that keeps this fresh: Mary Astor unable to look anyone in the eye, Sydney Greenstreet's belly-slapping Kasper Gutman, Elisha Cook's wild-eyed patsy, Wilmer, and, of course, Peter Lorre's perfuned Joel Cairo, whom Sam Spade enjoys hilting just a bit too much.



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THE WEEKEND REVIEW
The Independent 26 December 1998

DO T4: Madeline (R) (S) (5867688). **7.25** T4: Animal Alphabet (6877152). **7.30** T4: The Magic School Bus (88864). **8.00** T4: Biker Mice from Mars (R) (T) (19210). **8.30** T4: The Magic Keeper (69751). **9.00** Morning Line (S) (46317). **10.00** Delly Telegraph Junior Golfer of the Year (T) (88828). **11.00** Transworld Sport (T) (84404). **12.00** The Monkees (11997).

(R) (S) (431512). 7.00 George of the Jungle (R) (S) (431512). 7.00 George of the Jungle (R) (5756539). 7.30 Milkshakel (S) (2397539). 7.35 Wimzle's House (R) (6952442). 8.00 Lassie (S) (7363794). 8.30 Wishbone (R) (S) (7362065). 9.00 Land of the Lost (R) (7353317). 9.30 The Incredible Hulk (9108220). 10.30 Loggerheads (R) (7342201). 11.00 The Best of Pepsi (R) (S) (T) (8584084). 11.30 Singled Out (R) (S) (8585713). 12.00 Boyzone (R) (S) (42174423). 12.25 Togs Special (S) (42177510). 12.55 The Gods of Olympus (70915084). 110 Rad: Surfing the Volcano (R) (S) (26418020). 1.40 Anythingts Possible (14328639). 1.50 5 News (S) (T) (14315423). 2.00 Blast (S) (1267442).

900

Channel 4 Racing from Kempton Park. The highlight of which is the King George VI Chase at 2.20pm (this is the one that everybody's favourite grey. One Man, used to regard as his own). The other races are the 12.40, 1.10, 1.45 and 2.55pm (64708046).

The Nativity (175617), 3.30 Countdown Grand Final (R) (T) (6984607), 4.15 Granpa (R) (T) (7993607).

2.30 Sportsweek on 5. Recalls motor-racing highlights from the 1988 Fedex championship, which will get people tuning in in their droves, I'm sure (S) (2931317).

4.50 Alice through the Looking Glass. Terrific new adaptation of Lewis Carroll's fantasy novel about a

young girl transported to a perverse, magical world. With Kale Beckinsals as Alice, and a meaty cast which includes Sian Phillips (as the Red Queen), Geoffrey Palmer (White King), Penelope Wilton (White Queen), Steve Coogen, Ian Holm and Ian Richardson (T) (50665572).

6.55 Night Fever. Suggs and another round of his karaoke entertainment show - in which a selection of C/D-list celebs appear to be having a good time. With Katte Puckrik, Shaun Willamson, Francine Lewis, Darren Boyd, Nikki Diamond, Phil Turinell, Jocelyn Brown, Jane Couch, Timmy Mellett, Steven Pinder and Brett Cousins (4194510). 5.55 5 News and Sport (S) (T) (2198152). 6.00 Hercules - the Legendary Journ Hercules - the Legendary Journeys. Our body-sculpted demi-god has apparently given up his powers to marry Serena, which allows Ares and Strife to plot his downfall. Don't ask (S) (7156152). Sunset Beach Omnibus. No, you haven't overdosed on the Christmas brandy, this really is as you see it. Hypnotically bad US soap (R) (S) (T) (35471305).

6.25

7.45 **5 News and Sport** (S) (T) (5082238).

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8.05 Xena: Warrlor Princess. When Xena and Gabrielle are summoned to the village of Cormier by Mefeager the Mighty, they errive to find that their famous warrlor friend has just been convicted of murder. So it goes (S) (6826046).

9.00 OO Hallfax FP. Drama series about an Australian forensic psychiatrist, in case you can't find anything better to do on Boxing Day evening than to tune into Channel 5. Our lass is up against a serial sex killer who, it says here, "embellishes his victims", whatever that might mean. Life is further complicated when a leading psychic issues a profile of the murderer in direct opposition to her own (S) (T) (38483201).

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10.50 Swindon Superbabes. Repeat documentary about Karen May, who runs the Swindon-based modelling agency that launched Melinda Messenger (Fl) (6373143).
11.50 IZIM Supervixens (Russ Meyer 1974 US). More large-chested lunacy from Meyer. Wrongly accused of murdering his wife, a car mechanic flees the police only to encounter some improbably busty women (4173355).

ITIM OSS (Irving Pichel 1946 US). In a glddy change of pace, we're now in Occupied France just before D.Day with the heroes and herolnes of the Overseas Special Services. Alan Ladd stars (8948973). To 3.50am.



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